

Prepositions of Time

What is a preposition?

Prepositions are words that precede a noun or pronoun and express a relation between it and another word. A preposition of time can express when something happens at one point in time or when something happens over an extended period of time.

| Prepositions Expressing One Point In Time | | |
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| Preposition | How It's Used | Examples |
| On | Used with days. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are meeting for lunch <i>on</i> Friday. ▪ The midterm is <i>on</i> Tuesday. ▪ Finals start <i>on</i> the 12th. |
| At | Used with times of the day, including noon, midnight, and night. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I will arrive <i>at</i> 7 p.m. ▪ Most animals sleep <i>at</i> night. ▪ I woke up <i>at</i> noon. |
| In | Used with other parts of the day (<i>not</i> night, noon, or midnight), with months, with years, and with seasons. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I brew coffee <i>in</i> the morning. ▪ He graduated <i>in</i> 2008. ▪ They got married <i>in</i> June. ▪ The roads get icy <i>in</i> winter. |

| Prepositions Expressing Extended Time | | |
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| Preposition | How It's Used | Examples |
| Since | Expresses an action or state that was started and is still happening. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He has been working on it <i>since</i> last year. ▪ She has lived here <i>since</i> 1988. |
| For | Expresses the duration of an action or event. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I will be gone <i>for</i> a day. ▪ She was sick <i>for</i> a week. |
| From & To/Until | Expresses the beginning and end of a period of time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I will be here <i>from</i> Monday <i>to</i> Friday. ▪ He lived in San Jose <i>from</i> 1995 <i>to</i> 2005. ▪ My office hours are <i>from</i> 12 p.m. <i>to</i> 3 p.m. ▪ The road is closed <i>from</i> March <i>until</i> June. |
| During | Expresses a period of time over which an action occurs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I read a book <i>during</i> my lunch break. ▪ Owls sleep <i>during</i> the day. |
| Within | Used to show something will take place before a certain time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He will graduate <i>within</i> a year of entering the program. (No later than one year from his entry.) ▪ I will be there <i>within</i> 30 minutes. |

Provide the correct preposition:

1. I will complete all of my chores _____ Saturday.
2. We went on vacation _____ two weeks.
3. You must complete the in-class essay _____ one hour.
4. I normally go to bed _____ 10 p.m. sharp.
5. Helen has been a vegetarian _____ 2006.
6. Paul could not stay alert _____ the presentation.
7. The keynote speaker arrives _____ noon.
8. Tim and Alice got married _____ 1997.
9. The play runs _____ January _____ July.
10. My dog likes to go for a walk _____ the afternoon.

Key: 1. on 2. for 3. within 4. at 5. since 6. during 7. at 8. in 9. from, to/until 10. in

Works Consulted:

"Prepositions of Time, Place, and to Introduce Objects." [The OWL at Purdue](http://www.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/eslprep4.html). Purdue University Writing Lab. 29 October 2008. <<http://www.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/eslprep4.html>>.