

# Prepositions of place: in, on, at, next to

## Introduction



The laptop is **on** the desk. The cup is **next to** the laptop. The flowers are **in** a vase.

## Definition

We use the prepositions 'in', 'on', 'at' and 'next to' to for location and position.

## Uses

	Uses	Examples
in	An enclosed space	<b>in</b> a box, a bag, a room, a cupboard, a cup
	Towns, cities, states, countries, continents etc.	<b>in</b> Birmingham, Kent, California, Japan, Asia
	Other large areas	<b>in</b> the countryside, a neighbourhood, a district, a park, a car park, a garden, the world
	Roads	<b>in</b> a street, a road, an avenue, the High Street, Bingley Road [UK]
	Pictures and documents	<b>in</b> a picture, a photo, a painting, a report, an email, a contract, a newspaper, a magazine, a book, a film
	Some (smaller) forms of transport	<b>in</b> a car, a taxi, a helicopter, an open boat
on	A surface - horizontal or vertical	<b>on</b> the table, the wall, a shelf, a screen, a plate, a face, a head, page 2, the front cover of the book, the menu
	Transport and travel	<b>on</b> a bus, train, a boat, a ship, a flight, a trip, a journey, a picnic, a bike ride, a break, holiday
	Some locations	<b>on</b> the left, the right, the side, the coast, the beach, the 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor <b>on</b> an island, a farm, a college campus <b>on</b> a road/street/avenue etc. [mainly US] <b>on</b> a motorway, the High Street, Oxford Street [i.e. main roads]

	Uses	Examples
<b>on (the) top of</b>	At the highest point of something tall or high	<b>on</b> top of a cupboard, wardrobe, a hill, a mountain
<b>at</b>	Some locations that are buildings	<b>at</b> the cinema, the theatre, the pub, a restaurant, work, home, school, university
	Some other locations	<b>at</b> the beach, the lake
	A point on a journey	<b>at</b> a junction, traffic lights, a corner, a bus stop
	An address	<b>at</b> 88 Bingley Road, 10 Downing Street
	Positions	<b>at</b> the back, the front, the top, the bottom, the end

## 'In' and 'out'

As adverbs, these can be used alone to mean 'here' or 'not here':

- "Can I speak to Jack, please?"
- "Sorry, he's not **in** today. Can I take a message?" [not at work]
- I'm the only person at home today. Everyone else is **out**. [not at home]
- We're going\* **out** later, maybe to the cinema; we're not sure yet.
- I didn't hear you come **in** last night; what time was it?



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