

Prepositions of place

Introduction



The family is sitting **on** a bench **in** the garden.

Grandpa is **on** the left and mum and dad are **at** the back. Grandma is **in** the middle, **between** the children. The dog is **on** the right.

Prepositions of place

These prepositions give us information about where something is located. The following tables give some guidelines and examples but you may hear some variations depending on sentence structure, context and regional variations.

In, on, at

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

at	Some locations that are buildings	at the cinema, the theatre, the pub, a restaurant, work, home, school, university
	Some other locations	at the beach, the lake
	A point on a journey	at a junction, traffic lights, a corner, a bus stop
	An address	at 88 Bingley Road, 10 Downing Street
	Positions	at the back, the front, the top, the bottom, the end

Other prepositions of place

	Uses	Examples
above 	Higher than	Our plane is now above the clouds. Let's put the shelf on this wall above the TV.
Under 	Directly below	The cat's under the table.
Opposite 	On the other side of something	I sat opposite James at the meeting. The bank is opposite the station.
Near 	A short distance from	"Is the hotel near the station?" "Yes, it's just a 5-minute walk away." We live near the sea. [up to a few km away]

next to 	Adjacent to, at the side of [closer than near]	We live next to the sea. [a few metres away - we can see it] I sit next to Jane at work.
behind 	At the back of	The car park is behind the shopping centre.
in front of 	Just ahead of or close to the front part of something	The shopping centre is in front of the car park. There's a statue in front of the fountain.
around 	On every side or in a circular way Just past a corner, after turning it 'Near', in this area	They sat around a table. There are lots of restaurants around the square. Where's the station; is it far? No, it's around the next corner. Is there a station around here?
between 	Having something on each side	The bank is between a supermarket and a book shop. My desk is between Harry's and Marie's.
From 	A point of origin	He lives in London now but he's from the north of England.

'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?

See also **Adverbs of time and place**.

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