Prepositions

A preposition describes the relationship between nouns, pronouns, and phrases in a sentence by introducing a prepositional phrase. A prepositional phrase usually consists of a preposition, the object of the preposition, and any words that modify the object of the preposition.

E.g., My office is located in the red building.

The prepositional phrase “in the red building” is introduced by the proposition “in.” “Building” is the object of the preposition, which the words “the” (an article) and “red” (an adjective) modify.

Different prepositions are used in different circumstances:

Use **on** with days:

E.g., I will see you on Friday.

Use **at** with the time of day:

E.g., My train departs at six.

Use **in** for parts of the day, months, years and seasons:

E.g., My birthday is in April.

Use **of** with words such as approve, consist, smell, dream, and think

E.g., The CEO doesn’t approve of that plan.

I dream of a job in Finance.

With expressions of extended time, the following prepositions are used: **since, for, by, from (to), from (until), (with)in.**

E.g., Apple has struggled since Steve Jobs’ death.

The advertisement ran from January to May. (OR from January until May)

The prepositions **in, inside, on, at, over, above, under, underneath, beneath, below, near, next to, by, between, among, opposite** discuss relationships of place and location.

E.g., She works near Grand Central Station.

We found the tickets inside the envelope.

Remember that it is best not to end a sentence with a preposition.

E.g., Which team did you train with? (ends in preposition) vs. With which team did you train?

This handout adapted from: The Writing Lab, The OWL at Purdue, and Purdue University. “Prepositions for Time, Place, and Introducing Objects.” Purdue Online Writing Lab. Web. 18 Jan. 2012, with additional examples by Maureen Terese McCarthy,