

Prepositions are words like *by, in, in front of, on*.

Notice that you cannot always use English prepositions in the same way as in your own language. It is therefore not always possible to translate prepositions.

You can use a preposition + a noun when you say where you do something or where something is.

**Example:** I live *in* a flat.

In this example *in* is a preposition of place.

You can also use a preposition + a noun when you say when you do something or when something happens.

**Example:** My birthday is *in* June.

In this example *in* is a preposition of time.

So prepositions can have different meanings or uses.

Sometimes two or three words can make a preposition.

**Examples:** *next to, in front of, on top of*.

## Prepositions of movement

Some prepositions describe the movement or action which takes place. They always follow a verb of movement, like *walk, run, drive, sail, jump*.

**Examples:**

We walked *up* the hill and cycled *down* the other side.

He climbed *over* the wall and got *into* the room *through* the window.

We flew *across* the Atlantic in five hours.

She walked *along* the road *past* the hospital.

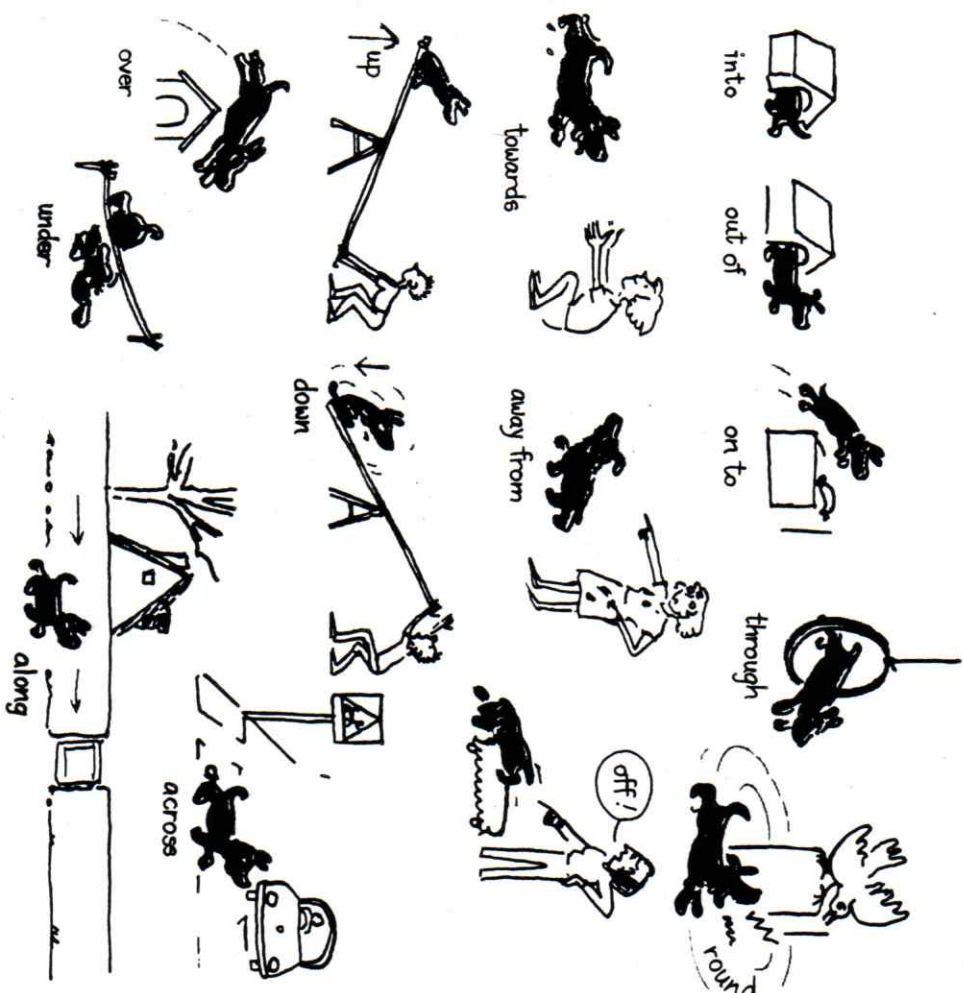
He threw his cigarette *out of* the window.

Don't try to run *away from* me.

We drove *over* Brooklyn Bridge *towards* Manhattan.

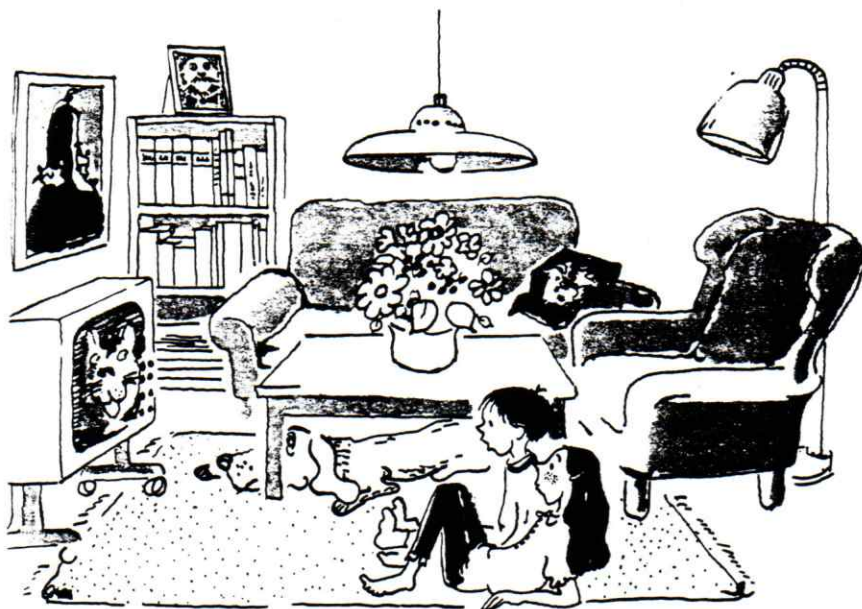
He jumped *on to* his motorbike and rode *round* Trafalgar Square *at* high speed.

The ship sailed *under* the Golden Gate Bridge *into* San Francisco Bay.



## Prepositions of place

Some prepositions describe where something or someone is. They always follow a verb like *be*, *stand*, *lie* and *sit*.



### Examples:

There's a picture *above* the television.  
There are some flowers *on* the table.  
There's a photograph *on top of* the bookcase.  
There's a dog *under* the table.  
There's a lamp *behind* the armchair.  
There are two children *in front of* the television.  
There's a light *over* the table.  
There's a vase of flowers *below* the light.  
There's a bookcase *beside* (*by*, *next to*) the sofa.  
There are two children *in* the room.

## Prepositions of time

Use the following prepositions of time when you talk about when something happens (times, dates, etc.).

### *in*

1. With parts of the day.
2. With months.
3. With seasons.
4. With years.
5. With centuries.
6. To say how soon something will happen.

### Examples:

We watch television *in* the evening.  
My birthday's *in* July.  
It snows a lot *in* winter.  
I left school *in* 1984.  
My grandfather was born *in* the 19th century.  
I'll see you *in* two days.

### *at*

1. With exact times.
2. With holidays/religious festivals.
3. With 'night'.
4. With 'the beginning' and 'the end'.
5. With 'the weekend'.

### Examples:

I get up *at* 7 o'clock and go to bed *at* midnight.  
I only see my parents *at* Christmas and sometimes *at* Easter.  
I can't sleep *at* night.  
I wasn't there *at* the beginning of the lesson.  
What did you do *at* the weekend?

### *on*

1. With days.
2. With dates.
3. With a day + morning, afternoon etc.

### Examples:

I finish work early *on* Friday.  
The meeting's *on* 2nd May.  
I'll see you *on* Wednesday afternoon.

### *until/till*

To mean 'up to' a certain time.

### Examples:

I slept *until/till* 9.30.  
We waited *until/till* they left.

### *by*

To mean 'before' or 'not later than'.

### Examples:

I'll be home *by* 4.  
You must finish *by* the time I leave.

### *during*

To mean 'in' or 'for' a period of time.

### Example:

I woke up twice *during* the night.

Notice you can only use *during* with an expression which answers the question 'When?' (*during the morning*, *during the summer*, *during November*). You cannot use *during* with an expression which answers the question 'How long?' (*three days*, *ten weeks*).

### *for*

Use *for* with a period of time. It answers the question 'How long?'.

### Examples:

I've been here *for* six months.  
They only stayed *for* five minutes.