

## Examples of common pairings

Because there are no established rules or methods to determine which prepositions accompany which verbs, we have to settle on memorizing some of the most common *verb + preposition* combinations.

The following sections contain numerous examples of commonly used prepositional verbs.

### Verb + for

The preposition *for* can be used with a number of verbs, often to emphasize purpose or reason. For example:

Verb + for	Example Sentences
apologize for	"Brittany never <b>apologizes for</b> her behavior."
ask for	"The student <b>asked for</b> a pencil."
beg for	"The man <b>begged for</b> a second chance."
care for	"I don't <b>care for</b> salads."
fight for	"Many generations of people have <b>fought for</b> freedom."
hope for	"The family is <b>hoping for</b> a miracle."
long for	"The man <b>longed for</b> the days of his youth."
pay for	"Who's going to <b>pay for</b> these tickets?"
provide for	"Parents are expected to <b>provide for</b> their children."
search for	"Did you <b>search for</b> the missing piece yet?"
wait for	"I'm <b>waiting for</b> the bus."
wish for	"Some people <b>wish for</b> nothing but fame."
work for	"She <b>works for</b> the government."

### Verb + to

*To* is commonly used with verbs and usually refers to direction (literal or metaphorical) or connections between people or things. For example:

Verb + to	Example Sentences
adjust to	"You'll <b>adjust to</b> your new school in no time."
admit to	"He <b>admitted to</b> reading her diary."
belong to	"The wallet <b>belongs to</b> that woman over there."
travel to	"I am <b>traveling to</b> England tomorrow."
listen to	"Grace is <b>listening to</b> music in her room."
go to	"Anthony, please <b>go to</b> the back of the classroom."
relate to	"I can't <b>relate to</b> this character at all."
respond to	"Josh <b>responded to</b> his friend's email."
talk to	"He <b>talked to</b> the manager for more than an hour."
turn to	" <b>Turn to</b> page 46 for a diagram of the procedure."

### Verb + about

Many verbs take the preposition *about* when referring to things, events, or gerunds. For example:

Verb + about	Example Sentences
ask about	"I <b>asked about</b> the company's job opening."
care about	"She doesn't seem to <b>care about</b> going to college."
complain about	"The boy <b>complained about</b> his early curfew."
forget about	"I <b>forgot about</b> the wedding reception."
hear about	"Did you <b>hear about</b> the renovation project?"
joke about	"Kim often <b>jokes about</b> her high-pitched voice."
know about	"What do you <b>know about</b> physics?"
laugh about	"The friends <b>laughed about</b> their terrible luck."
learn about	"Michelle is <b>learning about</b> film production."
talk about	"What are you <b>talking about</b> ?"
think about	"We'll need to <b>think about</b> hiring some more staff."
worry about	"So many adults <b>worry about</b> getting older."
write about	"Dean <b>wrote about</b> his day in his journal."

## Verb + with

Verbs using the preposition *with* usually point to connections and relationships between people or things. For example:

Verb + with	Example Sentences
agree with	"I don't <b>agree with</b> his opinions."
argue with	"The two <b>argued with</b> each other for several minutes."
begin with, start with	"Let's <b>begin with</b> a short quiz." "I shouldn't have <b>started with</b> a salad."
collide with	"It is possible, albeit unlikely, for an asteroid to <b>collide with</b> Earth."
compare with	"How does the restaurant's soup <b>compare with</b> Vera's?"
compete with	"When I run races, I only <b>compete with</b> the clock."
cope with	"It's not easy to <b>cope with</b> failure."
disagree with	"She <b>disagrees with</b> my suggestion."
interfere with	"Be careful not to <b>interfere with</b> the conference upstairs."
meet with	"When will you <b>meet with</b> her?"

## Verb + of

The preposition *of* can be used with a variety of verbs. For example:

Verb + of	Example Sentences
approve of	"Ellen doesn't <b>approve of</b> her sister's friends."
consist of	"Pizza <b>consists of</b> bread, cheese, and tomato sauce."
dream of	"I <b>dream of</b> visiting Europe."
hear of	"Have you <b>heard of</b> this new TV show?"
take care of	"Who will <b>take care of</b> your goldfish while you're away?"
think of	"If you only <b>think of</b> failure, you'll never take any risks."

## Verb + in

The preposition *in* accompanies several verbs and tends to point to involvement or connections between people or things. For example:

Verb + in	Example Sentences
believe in	"The majority of children <b>believe in</b> Santa Claus."
engage in	"Maurice likes to <b>engage in</b> political debates."
invest in	"Now is the time to <b>invest in</b> as many companies as possible."
live in	"Haley <b>lives in</b> Seattle."
participate in	"What sports did you <b>participate in</b> as a kid?"
result in	"The hotel's failure to exterminate the bed bugs <b>resulted in</b> fewer customers."
specialize in	"English majors can choose to <b>specialize in</b> creative writing or literature."
succeed in	"Steven <b>succeeded in</b> earning a scholarship."

## Verb + at

*At* is commonly used with verbs to indicate places, skills, and reactions. For example:

Verb + at	Example Sentences
arrive at	"We <b>arrived at</b> the hotel in the morning."
balk at	"Melissa <b>balked at</b> taking out the garbage."
excel at	"My five-year-old niece already <b>excels at</b> math and science."
laugh at	"The boy couldn't stop <b>laughing at</b> Isabella's joke."
look at	" <b>Look at</b> the whiteboard, please."
nod at	"She <b>noded at</b> her coworkers."
shout at	"He could hear someone <b>shouting at</b> the TV."
smile at	"My son <b>smiles at</b> me every time I walk through the door."
stare at	"It's uncomfortable when people <b>stare at</b> you."

## Verb + on

The preposition *on* is used with a number of different verbs. For example:

Verb + on	Example Sentences
agree on	"The committee finally <b>agreed on</b> a solution."
bet on	"I wouldn't <b>bet on</b> that happening."
comment on	"The lawyer briefly <b>commented on</b> the lawsuit."
concentrate on, focus on	"He's trying to <b>concentrate on</b> his work." "I'm too tired to <b>focus on</b> this assignment."
decide on	"He eventually <b>decided on</b> a career path."
depend on, rely on	"You can't <b>depend on</b> him forever." "Too many students <b>rely on</b> the Internet to conduct research."
elaborate on	"This paragraph <b>elaborates on</b> the previous one's claims."
experiment on	"The company offered assurances that it does not <b>experiment on</b> animals."
insist on	"She <b>insisted on</b> joining us."
operate on	"Aspiring surgeons learn how to <b>operate on</b> people."
plan on	"Do you <b>plan on</b> attending the concert tomorrow?"

### Verb + from

The preposition *from* is commonly used with verbs to identify a point of origin or a connection or disconnection between people or things. For example:

Verb + from	Example Sentences
benefit from	"Aspiring musicians <b>benefit from</b> getting public exposure for their music."
come from	"Saya <b>comes from</b> Japan."
differ from	"How does milk chocolate <b>differ from</b> white chocolate?"
escape from	"The prisoners <b>escaped from</b> their captors."
recover from	"The girl <b>recovered from</b> her illness."
refrain from	"Could you please <b>refrain from</b> shouting?"
resign from	"The CEO <b>resigned from</b> her position after 25 years with the company."
retire from	"He <b>retired from</b> his job last year."
suffer from	"Many people <b>suffer from</b> social anxiety."

### Verb + other prepositions

Other prepositions can be used to create prepositional verbs. Some of these prepositions are *against*, *into*, and *like*. For example:

- "We **decided against** visiting my aunt."
- "The car nearly **crashed into** a tree."
- "I **feel like** going on an adventure."

### Verbs with multiple prepositions

Certain verbs can take multiple prepositions without changing the overall meaning of the sentence. For example, the verb *talk* can use the prepositions *to* and *with* interchangeably:

- "I need to **talk to** the principal."
- "I need to **talk with** the principal."

On the other hand, some verbs' meanings do change when a different preposition is introduced. For example, the verb *dream* can mean *to aspire* when it is used with the preposition *of*; however, when it is used with the prepositions *about*, it means *to see images during sleep*. For example:

- "She **dreams of** becoming a pilot." (aspiration)
- "She often **dreams about** flying." (image during sleep)