

# Prepositions

A preposition is a word that is used with nouns and pronouns (and sometimes verbs) to show their relationship to some other part of a sentence.

## Some key rules for using prepositions:

1. Remember that in English, we can often simply connect two related nouns (Spanish class, chocolate cake, John's book). In Spanish, related nouns have to be connected with prepositions (la clase de español, la torta de chocolate, el libro de Juan).
2. If a verb follows a preposition, it is ALWAYS in the infinitive.  
**Para entender**, necesitas estudiar más.  
Vamos **a visitar** más esta noche.  
Él trató **de aprender** las palabras.
3. Prepositions can never be used at the end of a sentence in Spanish (unlike English). They have to be used in the middle of a sentence or at the beginning of a question. Contrast: "What are you talking about?" and "¿De qué estás hablando?"
4. After a preposition, use "mi" and "ti" when referring to "yo" and "tú". In all other cases, use the subject pronouns (él, ella, nosotros, ellos, ellas, usted, ustedes, not the object pronouns). Two exceptions are the words "conmigo" (with me) and "contigo" (with you).
5. There are some verbs that require a preposition in English but do not in Spanish. (Unless the direct object is a noun in which case the personal "a" would be used).
  - a. buscar – already means "to look for" – Yo busco el libro.
  - b. escuchar – already means "to listen to" –Yo escucho la música.
  - c. esperar – already means "to wait for" or "to hope for" – Yo espero el tren.
  - d. mirar – already means "to look at" or "to watch" –ellos miran el cuadro nuevo.
  - e. pagar – already means "to pay for" – Nosotros pagamos la comida.
  - f. pedir – already means "to ask for" – Ellos pidieron más tiempo.
6. There are many verbs in Spanish which should be followed by a preposition. These are idiomatic and should be learned through use. A couple of key examples are listed (there are more than 100 of these, mostly using "a", "con", "de", "en" and "por"). Please consult *Abriendo Paso: Gramática* p. 375-380 for additional resources.

ir a...to go to

enseñar a...to teach to

empezar a...to begin to

subir a...to get on, to get into, to climb into

soñar con...to dream of, to dream about

dejar de...to stop doing something, to fail to

tratar de...to try to

enamorarse de..to fall in love with

acordarse de....to remember

bajar de...to get out of, to descend from, to get off

preocuparse de...to worry about, to be concerned about

quejarse de...to complain of or about

insistir en...to insist on

pensar en...to think of, to think about

confiar en...to rely on, to trust (in)

entrar en...to enter, to go into

estar por...to be in favor of

luchar por...to struggle to

## Simple prepositions:

a...at, to	ante...before	bajo...under
con...with	contra...against	de...of, from
desde...from, since	durante...during	en...in, on, into, at
entre...among, between	excepto...except	hacia...toward
hasta...until, as far as, up to	mediante...by means of	menos...except
salvo...except, save	según...according to	sin...without
sobre...on, about, over, concerning	tras...after, behind	
para...for, in order to, considering	por...for, by, through, for the sake of, in exchange for, per	

## Some Compound prepositions

(Note that all of the following end in one of the simple prepositions. These are used to show relationships between position, direction, time, etc.)

This is a small sampling of compound prepositions. Please consult *Abriendo Paso: Gramática* p. 375-380 for additional resources.

a causa de...because of, on account of  
a lo largo de...throughout  
a pesar de...in spite of, despite  
a través de...through  
al lado de...next to, alongside of  
alrededor de...around (place)  
antes de...before  
cerca de...near, close to  
debajo de...under, beneath  
delante de...in front of  
dentro de...within, inside of, in

después de...after  
detrás de...behind  
en vez de...instead, in place of  
enfrente de...in front of  
en medio de...in the middle of  
encima de...on top of, above, over  
frente a...opposite to, across from  
fuera de...outside of, beyond  
junto a...next to, close to  
lejos de...far from, distant from