

Prepositions: At, In, and On

Prepositions are words or phrases that indicate agency, comparison, concession, manner, place and time, purpose, etc. They include words like:

about	before	from	regarding	toward(s)
according to	but	in addition to	regardless of	unlike
after	by	in order to	since	until
among	contrary to	in relation to	such as	with
as	despite	like	throughout	without

The correct use of prepositions comes with practice. Many prepositions can be used to express the same relationship between two ideas, and the same verb can be used with many prepositions depending on the context.

At

To specify the place, use "at" before a specific location.

I was not **at home** when you called yesterday.
Sam will be **at school** until 3 o'clock.

To specify the time, use "at" before a specific time (including noon, night, and midnight).

I have to get up **at 6 a.m.** every morning.
They left the library **at midnight**.

In

To specify the place, use "in" before countries, states or provinces, cities or towns, and enclosed places.

My entire family lives **in Canada**.
The dog is not allowed to go **in the house**.

To specify the time, use "in" before years, seasons, months, parts of the day, and periods of time.

He prefers to shower **in the morning** than before going to bed.
My final exams are **in three weeks**.

On

To specify the place, use "on" before a surface or street.

They looked in bewilderment at the poster **on the wall**.
I bumped into Steve **on Sparks Street** today.

To specify the time, use "on" before a specific day or date.

You two should have supper together **on Friday**.
We are celebrating Norman's birthday **on May 9**.

To know more, see *Checkmate*, the *Oxford Collocations Dictionary*, the *Oxford Learner's Grammar*, or similar writing guides.