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## THE PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE

Here are some key facts about prepositional phrases:

1. A phrase is a group of words without a subject and verb, used as one part of speech. Prepositional phrases are one type of phrase. Each prepositional phrase always begins with a preposition. **A prepositional phrase NEVER, EVER contains a verb.**
2. The prepositional phrase consists of the preposition, its object, and any modifiers of the object. **The object of the preposition is always a noun, pronoun, or a group of words used as a noun and comes after the preposition.** To find the object of the preposition, first say the preposition, then ask, "Who/Whom or What?"

The coin fell **between the cracks**.

Between is the preposition in the above sentence. To find the object of the preposition ask "Between what?" The noun "cracks" answers the question, so it is the object of the preposition.

3. Prepositional phrases are used as adjectives or adverbs.

When prepositional phrases are used as adjectives, the phrase comes immediately after the noun or pronoun it modifies. The phrase answers one of the following questions about the word it modifies: **Which one? What kind? How many/how much? Whose?**

My check **for the dress** is in the mail.

The prepositional phrase, "for the dress," tells which check. The phrase is used as an adjective modifying the noun "check."

B. When prepositional phrases are used as adverbs, they may be found any place in the sentence. The adverb phrase tells how, when, where, or to what extent about a verb, adjective, or adverb.

The boy fell **on the steps**.

The phrase "on the steps" tells where the boy fell. It modifies the verb "fell" and is used as an adverb because it answers the question "where" he fell.

Later on, we will discuss the difference between when some words are used as an adverb versus as a preposition.

4. The following is a list of frequently used prepositions:

(This is only a sample of the MANY prepositions in the English language.)

about	down	since	
above	during	through	
across	except	throughout	according to
after	for	till	
against	from	to	away from
around	in	toward	because of
at	inside	under	by way of
before	into	until	in addition to
behind	like	up	in front of
below	near/nearby	upon	in place of
beneath	of		in regard to
beside	off	with	in spite of
besides	on		instead of
between	out	without	
beyond	outside		on account of
by	over		out of

Directions: **Underline** all the prepositional phrases in the following sentences. **Highlight** the prepositions. The number after the sentence indicates the number of prepositional phrases in the sentence. The first one is done for you.

1. After the movie the group of teenagers went to McDonalds for a burger. (4)
2. Without sugar the blueberries were too sour for the dinner guests. (2)
3. Sally worked from midnight to noon on her science project. (3)
4. Over the river and through the woods to grandfather's house we go. (3)
5. He ate three boxes of popcorn with butter during the movie. (3)
6. Despite his fear of water Jack saved the drowning puppy. (2)
7. Janet took her lunch with her to the seminar. (2)
8. At the Country Fair, the child with the freckles won the talent contest. (2)
9. For breakfast she likes bananas with strawberries. (2)
10. Down the dark alley, the cat chased a rat with long whiskers. (2)
11. The police searched throughout the apartment complex for the escaped criminal. (2)
12. During the summer, Gordie fishes under the large oak tree beside Silver Creek. (3)

13. By noon, Jimmy decided a nap on the hammock would be nice. (2)
14. Geese live in flocks while cattle live among herds. (2)
15. Around the world, people of all nationalities are brought together through music. (3)
16. He likes movies about war; she prefers movies with a romantic theme. (2)
17. Away from home for the first time, Mary wrote numerous letters to her family. (3)
18. Mud squished beneath her feet as Ann walked through the woods during a rainstorm. (3)
19. A nineteenth century artist from Italy designed the sculpture above the entrance. (2)
20. Inside the auditorium, a group of dancers was practicing. (2)
21. Martin arrived with the others before the opening act of the play. (3)
22. The children searched for the Easter eggs beneath the porch and inside the house. (3)
23. Outside his apartment, Thomas struggled to find the key to the building. (2) (Be careful!)
24. According to the news, plenty of volunteers walked in the heavy rain to raise money for cancer research. (4) (Be careful!)
25. Between you and me, I am starting to get into this grammar stuff. (2) (Be careful!)

Source: Some sentences are copied or adapted from: M:\9-TLC\TLC Web Design\Handouts Worksheets\Grammar.Punctuation.Writing\Prepositional Phrase.doc orange