

# ***Prepositions (in, on, at, to)***

## Rules for Prepositions IN, ON, AT, TO

### Basic Rules

- A. AT a time
- B. ON a day
- C. IN a month (season, year, decade, century)
  
- D. AT an address
- E. ON a street
- F. IN an area (neighborhood, town, borough, state, country, continent, ocean, the world, the solar system, the universe)

### 20 Special Rules for Prepositions IN, ON, AT, TO

- 1. look AT and listen TO
- 2. TO with verbs of desire, necessity, expectation  
love TO, like TO, hate TO, want TO, need TO, have TO, hope TO, expect TO
- 3. AT night  
IN the morning, IN the afternoon, IN the evening
- 4. ON transportation  
ON the bus, ON the train, ON the subway, ON a plane, ON a jet, ON a ship,  
ON a bicycle, ON a motorcycle, ON a surfboard, ON a skateboard  
BUT  
IN a car, IN a taxi, IN a small boat, IN an elevator, IN a helicopter
- 5. AT an intersection (where two streets cross)  
AT Broadway and 42nd Street, AT Fifth Avenue and 34th Street
- 6. ON an island, ON a farm, ON a college campus, ON earth, ON a planet
- 7. expressions that mean sometimes use different prepositions:  
from time TO time, ON occasion, once IN a while
- 8. IN a park, IN a yard, AT a playground
- 9. ON anything flat  
ON a plate, ON the wall, ON the floor, ON a shelf, ON the blackboard,  
ON a table, ON a desk, ON the stove, ON your face, a hat ON your head
- 10. IN a room or anything smaller  
IN the closet, IN a drawer, IN a cup, IN a bowl, IN a glass, IN your  
mouth, ideas IN your head, a look IN your eye, a ribbon IN your hair
- 11. TO when moving from point A TO point B  
go TO school, drive TO work, take a trip TO Boston, take your kids TO  
school, fly TO London, walk TO the library, bring your dog TO the vet
- 12. ON a/an [adjective] morning, afternoon, evening, night, day  
ON a cold afternoon, ON a sunny morning, ON a rainy evening,  
ON a Saturday night, ON a spring day, ON a special night
- 13. ON vacation, ON the weekend, ON a trip, ON a picnic, ON your break,  
ON a leave of absence, ON your lunch hour
- 14. IN the water swimming (or drowning), ON the water boating
- 15. AT the beach (the whole place), lie ON the beach (=ON the sand), play IN the sand
- 16. ON anything like a line  
ON the coast, stand ON line, ON the border, ON the side, ON a team/committee
- 17. ON forms of communication  
ON TV, ON the radio, ON the phone, ON the fax machine, ON the computer, ON  
a disk, ON a CD, ON a hard drive, ON a channel, ON a screen
- 18. a report or news article ON the economy (ABOUT the economy)
- 19. ON time for an event or activity: Come to the meeting ON time. Be in class ON time.
- 20. IN time (or *too late*) TO do something: Get to the station IN time TO catch a train.