

Reference 4.4 Prepositions

Prepositions: Prepositions are words that describe the relationship between two nouns and sometimes two verbs.

Prepositions

1. a	1. to
2. antes	2. beforehand
3. antes de	3. before
4. con	4. with
5. contra	5. against
6. de	6. from, of
7. después	7. afterwards
8. después de	8. after
9. en	9. in, at
10. para	10. for, in order
11. por	11. for, by, through
12. sin	12. without

Rules for Prepositions:

- **Rule 1:** Prepositions do not always translate word for word from one language to another. There are no two languages that use a preposition exactly the same way. This is probably due to culture and how we view the relationships between two nouns or two verbs. The above translations from English to Spanish are the closest equivalents, but there are some circumstances that create exceptions.
 - **Time:** When we express time, some of the translations are lost from language to language; therefore, we must memorize these expressions.
 - When we express “at what time”, we use “a”, not “en”.
 - a las dos → at two o'clock
 - When we express “in the morning” or “at night”, we use “por”, not “en”.
 - Por la mañana → “in the morning”
 - Por la tarde → “in the afternoon”
 - Por la noche → “at night”
 - **Colloquial Expressions:** These expressions are some that we use in our everyday speaking that are not always expressed the same way in two languages. Again, this takes time, memorization and practice.
 - to be in love with: In Spanish, we say “to be in love of”, not “with”.
 - Estoy enamorado de ella → “I am in love with her.”

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- **Rule 2:** Prepositions can describe the relationship between two verbs, as well. If a verb in Spanish follows a preposition, it must be in the **infinitive form**. This rule tends to be difficult for English speakers, because they break this rule in their own language, as well.
 - I swim before I eat.
 - This is considered to be incorrect English. The reason it is incorrect is because you are not supposed to use the same subject twice in a sentence. Below is the incorrect usage in English and the correct usage.
 - **Incorrect:** I study before **I practice** the vocabulary.
 - Yo estudio antes de yo practico el vocabulario.
 - **Correct:** I study before **practicing** the vocabulary.
 - Yo estudio antes de practicar el vocabulario.
 - It is important that you do not take your incorrect English and translate it into Spanish.- **Rule 3:** Prepositions also contain Prepositional Pronouns. Prepositional Pronouns are pronouns that directly follow a preposition in any given sentence.

Prepositional Pronouns

	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1st Person	mí	nosotros
2nd Person	ti	vosotros
3rd Person	él, ella, usted	ellos, ellas, ustedes

Note: Prepositional Pronouns look almost identical to subject pronouns, except for first person singular and second person singular.

Example:

- I travel without you. Yo viajo sin ti.
- The gift is for me. El regalo es para mí.

Note: When a pronoun follows the preposition “con”, the words “mí” and “ti” will change to “conmigo” and “contigo”.

Example:

- She studies with me. Ella estudia conmigo.
- They have dinner with you every Saturday. Ellos cenan contigo cada sábado.

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Rule 4: You can never end neither a sentence nor a question with a preposition. This rule is broken all the time in English, but never in Spanish. This is especially true when English speakers form questions. **Most of the time** if a preposition is in the question, it will go at the beginning of the question. Below you will see the incorrect way English speakers express their questions and how it should be form. When you translate into Spanish, you must use the proper English in order to translate.

Example:

- Where are you from? **INCORRECT**
- From where are you? **CORRECT** (Believe it or not, this is correct English)

- Where do you travel to? **INCORRECT**
- To where do you travel? **CORRECT**

- Who do you speak with? **INCORRECT**
- With whom do you speak? **CORRECT**

Translation:

- Where are you from? → From where are you?
- “¿De dónde eres tú?”

- Where do you travel to? → To where do you travel?
- “¿Adónde viajas tú?”

- Who do you speak with? → With whom do you speak?
- “¿Con quién hablas?”