PREPOSITIONS

Time  at, on, and in

**At** designates a specific time, and is also used when referring to noon, midnight, and holidays.
The bus leaves at 2:30.
My family will be together at Thanksgiving.

**On** is used with days and dates.
The final exam is on Monday.
Your appointment is on February 12th.

**In** refers to a non-specific timeframe, such as months, seasons, and time of day.
Mohammed started University in September.
Maria is getting married in the summer.
I can meet you for coffee in the afternoon.

Place  at, on, and in

**At** refers to a specific place
Chris lives at 55 River Street.
Suri works at Dalhousie University.

**On** is used in connection with streets, and general locations
His office is on Barrington Street.
My friend’s apartment is on the 4th floor.

**In** designates larger land areas such as towns, provinces, and countries as well as enclosed spaces
Justin lives in Halifax.
Halifax is in Nova Scotia.
I am lucky to be living in Canada.
The cows sleep in the barn.

Movement  to, from

The preposition **to** implies movement toward some specific place
Nabila walks to work every day.
Catherine goes to Tim Horton’s for breakfast.

**From** is used to indicate movement away from something, or to denote affiliation
Wenxi ran from the burning building.
Paulo is from South America.

Time  for, since, by

**For** is used to indicate a particular duration of time
She studied for 8 hours.
**SINCE** implies that an activity was started at a point in time, and continues
Sarah has been studying *since* 6:00 a.m.
Pierre has been working on this project *since* December.

**BY** is used to specify the completion of an activity
You must finish your assignment *by* noon.
Ming hopes to graduate *by* 2015.

In English, there are very few consistent rules regarding the use of prepositions. However, certain nouns, adjectives, and verbs are associated with a particular preposition. Some examples follow, but when in doubt, consult a dictionary.

**Nouns and Prepositions**
- Approval of: You must have the approval of your professor to continue.
- Fondness for: Christine has a fondness for chocolate.
- Interest in: Juan has developed an interest in photography.
- Respect for: Sustainability encourages society to have respect for the environment.

**Adjectives and Prepositions**
- Capable of: You are capable of more complex work.
- Familiar with: Are you familiar with the writing of Shakespeare?
- Sorry for: I am sorry for losing your phone.
- Interested in: Ryan is interested in studying engineering.

**Verbs and Prepositions**
- Apologize for: Sophia must apologize for eating the last cupcake.
- Talk about (general): The professor is going to talk about the principles of macroeconomics.
- Talk to (specific): The professor is going to talk to several students after class.
- Grow up: What do you want to be when you grow up?
- Think about: Writers must think about their audience before beginning.

**No Preposition**
- Downstairs: The exit is downstairs.
- Inside: The inside cover gives a summary of the book.
- Outside: The children are playing outside.
- Downtown: That bus is heading downtown.