

Prepositional Phrases

A **phrase** is a group of closely related words used as a single part of speech but *NOT* containing a subject and a predicate.

A **prepositional phrase** is a group of words that begins with a preposition and usually ends with a noun or pronoun, called the **object of the preposition**.

I voted **against the idea**. [*Idea* is the object of the preposition *against*.]

The elevator is necessary **for us**. [*Us* is the object of the preposition *for*.]

The poet Nikki Giovanni was born **in 1943**. [The date *1943* is the object of the preposition *in*.]

A **prepositional phrase** can act as an *adjective* or an *adverb* in a sentence. Used as an adjective, a prepositional phrase modifies a noun or a pronoun. Used as an adverb, it modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

Take the elevator **on the right**. [adjective phrase modifying the noun *elevator*]

Which **of these elevators** is working? [adjective phrase modifying the pronoun *which*]

After the meeting, you should take this elevator **to the lobby**.
[adverb phrases modifying the verb phrase *should take*]

The elevator is helpful **to us**. [adverb phrase modifying the adjective *helpful*]

We sometimes work late **into the night**. [adverb phrase modifying the adverb *late*]

Practice with **Prepositional Phrases**: Grammar Lesson #61

Directions: Put parentheses around each prepositional phrase. Then underline each preposition, and circle the object of the preposition.

- 1) The airplane was flying above the clouds.
- 2) We are moving to North Carolina.
- 3) Sandra lives on the second block.
- 4) An old water tower once stood on that hill.
- 5) The car slid on the wet pavement.
- 6) Sealing wax was invented in the seventeenth century.
- 7) Motto rings were first used by the Romans.
- 8) Tungsten, a metal, was discovered in 1781.
- 9) Roses originally came from Asia.
- 10) The ball rolled into the street.
- 11) Do you always keep the puppies in a pen?
- 12) The children climbed over the tree.

- 13) She lives in Denver, Colorado.
- 14) Columbus made three trips to North America.
- 15) They spread the lunch under the shade of the giant elm tree.
- 16) The treasure was found by a scuba diver.
- 17) A squad of soldiers marched behind the tank.
- 18) Shall I row across the stream?
- 19) Large airplanes fly across the nation.
- 20) Walter looked into the sack.
- 21) The cat ran up the pole.
- 22) We visited Alexander Graham Bell Museum in Nova Scotia.
- 23) Many tourists come to our region.
- 24) We spent last summer in the Adirondack Mountains.
- 25) Do not stand behind a parked car.

Prepositional Phrases as Adjectives & Adverbs

A **prepositional phrase** can be used to describe a noun or a pronoun. Then the prepositional phrase is being used as an **adjective** to tell which one, what kind, or how many.

The bird in the tree whistled.

The prepositional phrase in the tree tells which bird.

A **prepositional phrase** can be used to describe a verb. Then the prepositional phrase is being used as an **adverb** to tell how, where, or when.

Charlie ate breakfast before leaving for school.

The prepositional phrase before leaving for school tells when Charlie ate breakfast.

Practice with Prepositional Phrases as Adjectives & Adverbs:
Grammar Lesson #62

Directions: Underline each prepositional phrase, and then classify it as an adjective or adverb.

- 1) They went to the ranch Adv
- 2) The first savings bank was established in France
- 3) Fall Creek Falls in Tennessee is my home. Adj
- 4) Return all the books to the public library
- 5) Mark lives in an old house
- 6) Tanya bought a sweater with red trim
- 7) The birds in the zoo are magnificent.
- 8) Jade is found in Burma
- 9) I spent the remainder of my money
- 10) The magician waved a wand over the hat, and a rabbit appeared.

Formative Assessment: Exercises 1 & 2, Writer's Choice, Page 524

Underline the prepositional phrase, and identify if it is an adjective or adverb.

1. Great environmental art is alive on the Great Plains. Adv
2. From an airplane, the vast cultivated fields resemble works of abstract art. Adv Adj
3. The varied designs are the result of modern farming methods. Aj
4. The plowed fields are basically hilly and rectangular in shape. Av
5. Farmers plow along the natural contours of the land. Adv Adj
6. Red, brown, and black patterns with a variety of textures result from the plowing. Adj Adj Adv
7. Irrigation equipment often pivots around a central water source. Av
8. This technique produces huge circular areas of bright green. Aj
9. No one on the Great Plains has consciously planned these designs. Adj
10. They are the bonus of the collaboration between the farmer and nature. Adj Adj