Space and its extensions: prepositional expressions

(1) The book is on the table.

(2) a. The squirrel ran up the tree.
    b. James, will you move the dinner table under the chandelier!

(3) a. The car is on the highway.
    b. The car is on the train.

(4) a. We'll go to the seaside on a holiday.
    b. Payments should be made on arrival.
    c. I congratulate you on passing your driving test.
    d. Lots of books have been written on New York.

(5) a. The car is on the highway.
    b. The car turned onto the highway.

(6) a. The car is parked behind the tree.
    b. The car stopped behind the tree.
(7) zero-dimensional (= point) at the corner
one/two-dimensional (= line/surface): on the border
three-dimensional (= volume): in the bottle

SOURCE PATH GOAL

come from pass by go to

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<td>CONTAINER</td>
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Table 1: The basic prepositions of dimension in English

(8) a. I'll meet you at the coffee shop on 125th st in Harlem.
     b. You enter by the backyard along the flower beds through the kitchen.

(9) a. John stood at the door.
     b. John stood by the door. / (b') John stood by Mary.
     c. John stood near the door./ (c') John stood near Mary.
     d. John stood with Mary.

(10) a. source of motion (= point): He came from home.
     a' initial state (= point): He was at home.
     b. goal of motion (= point): He went to the telephone.
     b'. resulting state (= point): He is by/near the telephone.
(11) a. source of motion (= point): The magician produced a rabbit from his hat.
   a'. initial state (= container): The rabbit was in his hat.
   b. goal of motion (= point): He emigrated to the United States.
   b'. resulting state (= container): He now lives in the United States.

(12) a. The dog jumped at the cat.
   b. Whole villages left for America.

(13) a. The ladder is on the wall. (= 'is hung up on the wall')
   a'. The ladder is standing against the wall. (= 'leaning against the wall')
   b. The lamp is on the ceiling. (= 'is fixed to the ceiling')
   b'. The chandelier is hanging from the ceiling.

(14) a. Mary brushed the crumbs off the table.
   b. Mary put the book on the table.
   c. Mary put the book onto the highest shelf.

(15) a. a hot potato in his mouth; a pain in his knee
   b. a cigarette in his mouth; a stick in his hand
   c. a hole in the sock; the highlights in the show
   d. the car in the driveway; the rising sun in the east

(16) a. I finally got my feet in the ski boots.
   b. The ski boots finally got on my feet.

(17) a. Hold the chopstick between your thumb and index finger.
   b. The mugger was hiding among a group of demonstrators.

(18) a. Mary jumped out of the water.
   b. Mary jumped in the water.
   c. Mary jumped into the water.
Table 2: The basic prepositions of orientation in English

(19) a. The monkey climbed up/down the tree.
   b. My office is over/under the boss's.
   c. The peak of this mountain is 800 feet above/below that of the other mountain.

(20) a. The flag is in front of/behind us.
   b. The castle is to the right/left of you.
(21) a. The drier is beside the washing machine.
   b. We live opposite the cathedral.
   c. Don't swim beyond the buoy.
(22) a. Place: He lives under the bridge.
   b. Goal: He went under the bridge. (and stopped there)
   c. Path: He went under the bridge. (from side to side)
(23) The corpse was found under the table in the lounge.

(24) a. We live near the Joneses.
b. We live close to the Joneses.
c. We live next to the Joneses.
d. We live in the vicinity of the Joneses.

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<th>Complex prepositions</th>
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<td>close to, next to, in the vicinity of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>to, at, for</td>
<td>towards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>away from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Path</td>
<td>by, past, via</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURFACE</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>on top of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>on, onto</td>
<td>on top of, against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>off</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Path</td>
<td>about, along,</td>
<td>across, alongside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>around</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTAINER</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>within, amidst, inside, in the middle of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interloc</td>
<td>between, among</td>
<td>amongst, in between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>in, into</td>
<td>into the middle of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>out, out of</td>
<td>outside of</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Path</td>
<td>through</td>
<td>throughout</td>
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<tr>
<td>LINK</td>
<td>Place, Goal, Path</td>
<td>over, under</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEVEL</td>
<td>Place, Goal, Path</td>
<td>above, below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HORIZONTAL</td>
<td>Place, Goal, Path</td>
<td>(before), behind, beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRONT/BACK</td>
<td>Place, Goal, Path</td>
<td>beside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT/RIGHT</td>
<td>Place, Goal, Source</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 3: Survey of English spatial prepositions

(25) a. The game went into injury time.
b. The ball went into the upper left corner of the net.
The game went into injury time
The ball went into the net

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Motion</th>
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<tr>
<td>POINT (time point)</td>
<td>at</td>
<td>by, past</td>
<td>to, till, until from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACT (time stretch)</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>about, around</td>
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<td>CONTAINER (time span)</td>
<td>in</td>
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<td>throughout, during</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interlocation</td>
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<tr>
<td>VERTICAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HORIZONTAL</td>
<td>before, after ago</td>
<td>up to</td>
<td>since</td>
</tr>
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*Table 4: Survey of English temporal prepositions*

(26) a. He arrived at the station at 7 p.m.
       b. I was waiting for him on platform 3 on a Sunday.
       c. We had champagne in the dining-car in the evening.

![Diagram](at 7 pm on a Sunday in the evening)

(27) a. He married on a Saturday morning.
       b. He married in the early morning.

(28) a. in the past nowadays in the future
       b. last time all present next time
(29) a. You will have to be in bed by 10 o'clock.  
    b. It's well past your bedtime.

(30) a. It's about time to go.  
    b. We met around Christmas.

(31) a. Let's meet (at) about ten o'clock.  
    b. Let's meet around ten o'clock.

(32) a. We had no rain from Friday to Sunday.  
    b. Regattas were scheduled right up to Christmas.  
    c. He was working (from Friday) until Sunday.  
    d. It wasn't until the last page that I discovered who the murderer was.  
    e. I have been married since 1975.  
    f. I got married twenty years ago.

(33) a. He stayed over the weekend.  
    b. He slept for three days.

(34) a. I wrote my paper (with) in a week.  
    b. I'll write my paper in a week.
(35) a. He was snoring throughout the film.
b. He slept during the lecture.
c. He fell asleep during the talk.
d. He stayed awake during the whole night.

(36) a. He'll come next week.
b. He'll be working next week.
c. When is the meeting? Next week or the next week?

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Table 5: Survey of English prepositions denoting abstract concepts.

(37) The hikers lost their way in the snowstorm.

(38) a. We were stuck in the traffic jam.
b. We want to live in peace.

(39) a. I read the whole book by candlelight.
b. He acted by the rules.

(40) a. I can't concentrate with all this noise.
b. With so many essays to write I doubt that I'll have the time to visit you.

(41) Having so many essays to write, I doubt that I'll have the time to visit you.

(42) a. Under these circumstances we can't accept your offer.
b. They only handed over the money under pressure.

(43) a. At Mario's flattering remark, Helen's face brightened.
b. Helen's face brightened at Mario's flattering remark.

(44) a. On entering my house, I uttered a fervent Thank God.
b. Participants should register on arrival.
(45) a. Cause: Why is the baby crying? - It is crying for joy. (= 'because it is having so much fun')
b. Reason: Why did he go on trial? - He went on trial for murder. (= 'because he murdered someone')
c. Purpose: Why is that man crying? - He's crying for help. (= 'in order to be helped')

(46) a. The dogs are fighting for the bone.
b. Because they want to get the bone, the dogs are fighting in order to get the bone.

(47) a. The country is hit by crime.
b. Many young drivers are killed through accidents.
c. He died of heart-failure.
d. He died from an overdose of drugs.
e. I got angry at my daughter's tone of voice.
f. We often laughed over this story.
g. I am delighted about my promotion.

(48) a. He hopped around in joy.
b. His voice flared with anger.
c. I could have died for shame.
d. He committed suicide out of despair.

(49) a. The driver was arrested for drunken driving.
b. Daddy yelled at me for saying "man" to him.

(50) a. The driver was accused/suspected of drunken driving.
b. Marcello brags of his chances with women.

(51) a. The teacher complimented the student on his good grades.
b. The suspect was wanted by the police on various charges.

(52) a. The candidate left for the White House.
b. The candidate ran for the White House.

(53) a. Billy squeezed the beetle for fun. (= 'in order to have fun')
b. Billy cried for help. (= 'in order to be helped')
c. Do not attempt to negotiate with a mugger for your belongings. (= 'in order to keep your belongings')

(54) a. She was hunting for money.
b. She was hunting after money.
(55) a. She is always talking about going on a dream vacation.
b. The professor talked on the effects of overpopulation.
c. Talk of the devil and he is sure to appear.
d. They are continuously quarreling over the dog.

(56) a. He is an expert on mechanics.
b. He is an expert at mechanics.
c. He is an expert in mechanics.

(57) a. My daughter is a lawyer by profession.
b. I am an optimist by nature.
c. Poland is very rich in coal.
d. My uncle deals in scrap metal.