



Unit 69 – Prepositions with Nouns (*Access to online education.. The smell of fresh coffee..*)

A) Certain prepositions can be combined with nouns to connect, emphasize, or clarify the thoughts expressed in sentences. In this preposition + noun combination, the preposition always comes directly *after* the noun / gerund.

Examples of common pairings – As with preposition + verb combinations, there are no established rules to determine which prepositions link with each noun. However, we can look at how **synonymous nouns** and **associated verbs** combine with prepositions to observe patterns and therefore make an educated guess.

Synonymous nouns use identical prepositions. As an example, when the noun ‘respect’ is replaced with its synonyms (such as *regard* or *admiration*), the preposition (for) remains the same:

-> I had a great deal of **respect** for / **regard** for / **admiration** for my father.

In other cases, however, the preposition *does* change with synonyms of the original noun:

-> His **fear** of flying was caused by a scare on a flight when he was a child. (original)

-> His **anxiety** about flying was caused by a scare on a flight when he was a child.

-> His **apprehension** over flying was caused by a scare on a flight when he was a child.

B) Associated verbs – certain prepositions used with nouns are the *same* prepositions used with the associated verb forms of those same nouns. For example:

-> Researchers carefully observed her **reaction** to the product. (noun)

-> Researchers carefully observed how she **reacted** to the product. (verb)

This is not always true though, because in some cases changing a noun into its verb form *changes* the preposition:

-> I have a lot of **sympathy** for those that have lost jobs during the pandemic.

-> I really **sympathize** with those that have lost jobs during the pandemic.

Also: **proud** of (verb) / **pride** in (noun); **ashamed** of / **shame** in; **obsessed** with / **obsession** over

Omitted verbs – some nouns take a preposition while their related verb *does not*. For example:

-> There was a **discussion** about whether to allow employees to work from home.

-> Company executives **discussed** whether to allow employees to work from home.

Also: **admiration** for / **ban** on / **improvement** in / **influence** on / **interview** with / **respect** for

C) Nouns with multiple prepositions – certain nouns can have two prepositions without a change in meaning:

-> His **opinion** of / about the project didn't change despite our best efforts. (*no change in meaning*)

Also: ‘He’s an **expert** in / at fixing bicycles.’ / ‘Her **love** for / of animals was easy to see.’

Various noun meanings – certain nouns have a different meaning if they are followed by **of + -ing** or a **to-infinitive**:

-> What’s the **chance** of winning the lottery? (chance = ‘likelihood’) *or*:

-> Will you get the **chance** to visit again soon? (chance = ‘opportunity’) / not: ‘chance ~~of visiting~~.’

Also: **sense** to (‘judgement’) & **sense** of (‘feeling’) / **way** to (‘method’) & **way** of (‘manner’)

--> Here are the most common noun + preposition combinations:

D) **Noun + to** – *to* holds various combinations and is one of the most common noun-preposition combination.

a) access to -> ‘Only authorized personnel have **access to** the computer system.’

b) addiction to -> ‘He is now fighting his **addiction to** alcohol.’

c) answer to -> ‘His **answer to** the teacher’s question was perfect.’

d) approach to -> ‘He’ll bring a fresh **approach to** the job.’ / ‘The plane crashed on its **approach to** the runway.’

e) damage to -> ‘The fire caused considerable **damage to** the church.’

f) dedication to -> ‘I’ve always admired her **dedication to** the job.’ *or*: ‘devotion to’

g) reaction to -> ‘What was his **reaction to** the news?’ *or*: ‘response to’

h) solution to -> ‘There’s no simple **solution to** this problem.’ / ‘Tim came up with a **solution to** the issue.’

i) threat to -> ‘Climate change represents a monumental **threat to** humanity.’



E) **Noun + for** – *for* refers to things / emotions that are regarded as quite important or sensitive.

- a) cure for → 'There is still no **cure for** AIDS.' / 'Aspirin is a wonderful **cure for** colds.'
- b) desire for → 'The **desire for** freedom is inherent in us all. or: 'passion for' / 'hope for'
- c) need for → 'There is **need for** greater diversity and choice in education.'
- d) reason for → 'We fully understood the **reason for** his decision.'
- e) respect for → 'Certain Asian cultures promote great **respect for** elders.' or: 'admiration for' / 'regard for'
- f) sympathy for → 'Fans often feel **sympathy for** the underdog.' or: 'empathy for'

F) **Noun + of** – the preposition *of* correlates directly with the noun itself.

- a) advantage of → 'The **advantage of** this new system is its flexibility.' or: 'disadvantage of'
- b) fear of → 'Molly had to overcome her **fear of** flying.'
- c) habit of → 'I'm trying to break the **habit of** staying up too late at night.'
- d) intention of → 'He had no **intention of** carrying out his threats.'
- e) lack of → 'The police could not arrest him due to a **lack of** evidence.'
- f) smell of → 'There was a **smell of** sawdust throughout the factory.'

G) **Noun + in** – *in* makes direct reference to the noun with regards to *objective information or change*.

- a) belief in → 'He has a strong **belief in** God.' / 'I admire his **belief in** what he is doing.'
- b) change in → 'There has been no major **change in** the patient's condition.'
- c) decrease in → 'There has been a steady **decrease in** the number of visitors.' or: 'reduction in'
- d) delay in → 'The **delay in** arrival of the shipment was due to a supply shortage.'
- e) experience in → 'She has already gained some **experience in** teaching.'
- f) interest in → 'Do your parents take an **interest in** your friends?' / 'He took a keen **interest in** the project.'

H) **Noun + on** – when combined with a noun, *on* indicates *concerning or in regards to*.

- a) advice on → 'Chris asked me for some **advice on** which computer to buy.'
- b) ban on → 'The city has a **ban on** smoking in public.' / 'The union announced a **ban on** overtime.'
- c) emphasis on → 'In Japan there is a lot of **emphasis on** politeness.'
- d) report on → 'She was to write a full **report on** her trip to France.'

I) **Noun + at** – The preposition *at* is only paired with a select few nouns. For example:

- a) attempt at → 'This is my second **attempt at** the exam.' or: 'try at'
- b) chance at → 'All children must have a **chance at** a good education.'

Note: -> *at* is often combined with the conjunction *with*. For example:

- a) age at which → '16 is the **age at which** teenagers can start to work in Canada.'
- b) point at which → 'We have reached a **point at which** we will not be able to abandon the project.'

J) **Noun + from** – *from* represents a point of origin, or two things that are in opposition to each other.

- a) protection from → 'Her coat gave her protection from the cold temperatures.'
- b) transition from → 'The transition from school to work can be difficult.'

K) **Noun + with** – *with* refers to relationships and connections between two or more things.

- a) matter with → 'What is the **matter with** you?' or: 'trouble with'
- b) problem with → 'I noticed a small **problem with** door when I walked into the office.'
- c) relationship with → 'She has a close **relationship with** her daughter.'

L) **Noun + about** – when combined with a noun, *about* means *concerning or in regards to*.

- a) information about → 'This brochure provides useful **information about** the city.'
- b) story about → 'My son loves to read **stories about** superheroes before he goes to bed.'

M) **Noun + between** – *between* indicates a direct comparison between two things.

- a) connection between → 'There is an obvious **connection between** smoking and lung cancer.'
- b) difference between → 'I can't notice any **difference between** these two shirts.'



Unit 69 – Exercises:

69.1 – Rewrite the italicized words with a similar meaning using a **noun** related to the underlined verb. **(69-B)**

1. There is growing support ~~to ban~~ the album altogether for its use of profanities. -> **'for a ban on'**
2. The town *lacks* adequate recreational facilities for its youth. -> _____
3. Dr. Martin Luther King *significantly influenced* the black rights movement. -> _____
4. The teachers *discussed* the best methods to teach online classes to students. -> _____
5. The building needs to *improve* its security and lighting. -> _____
6. Your achievements in English are something to *be proud of*. -> _____
7. She was very fortunate to *interview* the boxing champion right after his match. -> _____
8. My parents raised me to *respect* others regardless of their background. -> _____

69.2 – If necessary, correct the sentences. Focus on the words in italics. **(69-C)**

1. Is there any *chance of getting* tickets for the game tonight? **correct** _____
2. It's always common *sense of keeping* medicines stored in a safe area. _____
3. Mr. Smith's *way to speak* to his students quickly earned their respect. _____
4. Kevin asked for his father's *opinion about* his plans to travel. _____
5. The former American diplomat was an *expert with* military strategy. _____
6. Her *love of* music led to her being accepted to a prestigious arts college. _____
7. You never get a second *chance of making* a first impression. _____

69.3 – Match the clause on the left with the most appropriate clause/phrase on the right. **(69-all)**

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. The police are investigating the cause | from senior manager to director. |
| 2. There has been a significant increase | with the victim in the past. |
| 3. He was able to make a good transition | of her sudden disappearance. |
| 4. An investigation found that the cause | of the accused committing the crime. |
| 5. Aircraft control eventually lost contact | of the accident was speeding. |
| 6. He claimed that he had no connection | in crimes involving teenage gangs. |
| 7. The defence lawyer presented a photo | with the plane just after takeoff. |

69.4 – Complete each sentence with the most appropriate **preposition**. **(69-all)**

1. What sort of qualifications are required _____ this position?
2. I've always had an interest _____ astronomy. Looking up at the sky at night is really quite fascinating.
3. Trees form a natural protection _____ the sun's rays.
4. I give up! There is just no simple solution _____ this problem.
5. The advantage _____ living here is that it's downtown and near a subway station.
6. The average age _____ which people marry has increased steadily since the 1970's.
7. There is already a high demand _____ the product that we've just launched!
8. Mr. Smith put a lot of emphasis _____ respect among students in the classroom.

69.5 – Complete each sentence with a **noun/preposition** combination using your own ideas. **(69-all)**

1. We're going to need a **map of** the city. The downtown area is pretty complicated!
2. Brian took a _____ us all standing in front of the waterfall. It turned out beautifully!
3. Have you received the _____ our wedding? We're planning to have it next month!
4. Ted was quite _____ the amount of crime in his neighborhood before moving there.
5. I'll give you the _____ the bonus question if you cannot find it on your own.
6. The vandals caused considerable _____ our property when they tried to break in.
7. Kathy, unfortunately does not have a very good _____ her mother-in-law.
8. The teachers had a hard time understanding the _____ his rude behavior in class.