

Spanish Prepositions



Resources

<http://spanish.about.com/od/prepositions/a/prepositions.htm>

<http://www.learnspanishfeelgood.com/spanish-prepositions.html>

<http://www.trinity.edu/mstroud/grammar/>

<http://www.lingolex.com/swom/wom-porpara.htm>

<http://edufire.com/content/articles/153-fun-trick-to-remember-por-and-para>

Ortega, Beaven, Garrido & Scriver (2009): *¡Exacto! A Practical Guide to Spanish Grammar*. Hodder Education

Prepositions in Spanish are easy to understand, because they usually function in almost the same way as they do in English. On the other hand, prepositions can be one of the most challenging aspects of using Spanish, because it is not always easy to remember which preposition to use. A simple and very common preposition such as the Spanish *en* can be translated not only as "in," the most common translation, but also as "to," "by" and "about," among others.

A preposition is a type of word that is used to form a phrase; the phrase in turn functions as an adjective or adverb. In both English and Spanish, a preposition is followed by an object, which is usually a noun. The object also can be a pronoun or verb that functions as a noun. (Sometimes in English a preposition can appear at the end of a sentence, but that isn't done in

Spanish.) If all this doesn't make clear to you what a preposition is, that's fine — just look at the list below and it should be clearer what types of words we're talking about.

Let's look at a couple of sample sentences to see how the preposition relates its object to other parts of a sentence.

- **English:** I (subject) am going (verb) to (preposition) the store (prepositional object).
- **Spanish:** Yo (subject) voy (verb) a (preposition) la tienda (prepositional object).

In the above sentence the phrase "to the store" or *a la tienda* forms a phrase that functions as an adverb that complements the verb.

Here is an example of a prepositional phrase that functions as an adjective:

- **English:** I (subject) see (verb) the shoe (direct object) under (preposition) the table (prepositional object).
- **Spanish:** Yo (subject) veo (verb) el zapato (direct object) bajo (preposition) la mesa (prepositional object).

In this case, "under the table" is a phrase that works as an adjective to describe the shoe.

Like English, Spanish has perhaps a few dozen prepositions. The following list shows the most common ones along with some of the most common meanings and some short sample sentences. Keep in mind that the translations below aren't exhaustive. Some of the more difficult prepositions and those with a wide range of meanings are discussed in separate lessons.

a — to, at, by means of — *Vamos a la ciudad.* We are going to the city. *Vengo a las tres.* I am coming at 3. *Viajamos a pie.* We are traveling by foot.

antes de — before — *Leo antes de dormirme.* I read before going to sleep.

bajo — under — *El perro está bajo la mesa.* The dog is under the table.

cerca de — near — *El perro está cerca de la mesa.* The dog is near the table.

con — with — *Voy con él.* I am going with him.

contra — against — *Estoy contra la huelga.* I am against the strike.

de — of, from, indicating possession — *El sombrero es hecho de papel.* The hat is made of paper. *Soy de Nueva York.* I'm from New York. *Prefiero el carro de Juan.* I prefer John's car (I prefer the car of John).

delante de — in front of — *Mi carro está delante de la casa.* My car is in front of the house.

dentro de — inside — *El perro está dentro de la jaula.* The dog is inside the cage.

desde — since, from — *No comí desde ayer.* I haven't eaten since yesterday. *Tiró el béisbol desde el carro.* He threw the baseball from the car.

después de — after — *Comemos después de la clase.* We are eating after class.

detrás de — behind — *El perro está detrás de la mesa.* The dog is behind the table.

durante — during — *Dormimos durante la clase.* We slept during the class.

en — in, on — *Ella está en Nueva York.* She is in New York. *El perro está en la mesa.* The dog is on the table.

encima de — on top of — *El gato está encima de la casa.* The cat is on top of the house.

enfrente de — in front of — *El perro está enfrente de la mesa.* The dog is in front of the table.

entre — between, among — *El perro está entre la mesa y el sofá.* The dog is between the table and the sofa.

fuera de — outside of — *El perro está fuera de la casa.* The dog is outside of the house.

hacia — toward — *Caminamos hacia la escuela.* We are walking toward the school.

hasta — until — *Duermo hasta las seis.* I'm sleeping until 6.

para — for, in order to — *El regalo es para usted.* The gift is for you. *Trabajo para ser rico.* I work in order to be rich.

por — for, by — *Damos gracias por la comida.* We give thanks for the meal. *Fue escrito por Juan.* It was written by Juan.

según — according to — *Según mi madre va a nevar.* According to my mother it is going to snow.

sin — without — *Voy sin él.* I am going without him.

sobre — over, about — *Se cayó sobre la silla.* He fell over the chair. *Es un programa sobre el presidente.* It's a program about the president.

tras — after, behind — *Caminaban uno tras otro.* They walked one after (behind) the other.

Practical activities on Prepositions

[Para & por 1](#)

[Para & por 2](#)

[Para & por 3](#)

[Para & por 4](#)

[Por & para 1](#)

[Por & para 2](#)

Para terminar, un pequeño truco para recordar por y para:

<http://edufire.com/content/articles/153-fun-trick-to-remember-por-and-para>

Fun Trick to Remember Por and Para

Posted by [Tam P](#) on 27 May 2009 on <http://edufire.com>

To Remember Por just remember ATTRACTED

A round place

T hrough a place

R eason

A fter

C ost

T hank

E xchange

D uration

TO Remember Para remember PERFECT

P urpose (in order to) (w/verb infinitive)

E ffect something has on something else

R ecipient

F uture dates, event

E mployment

C omparison

T oward a specific place