



Palm Beach Atlantic University
Center for Writing Excellence

FORMATTING PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Prepositional phrases defined: A prepositional phrase is a modifying phrase that begins with a preposition and ends with its object. It can appear anywhere in the sentence, and it can be removed without losing the essential meaning.

Frequently used prepositions:

about	below	in spite of	regarding
above	beneath	instead of	since
according to	beside	into	through
across	between	like	throughout
after	beyond	near	to
against	but (meaning except)	of	toward
along	by	off	under
amid	concerning	on	underneath
among	down	on account of	until
around	during	onto	up
at	except	out	upon
atop	for	out of	with
because of	from	outside	within
before	in	over	without
behind	inside	past	

Simple Usage

We had to go over the bridge and around the sea wall to get back to campus.

Note: “We had to...get back to campus” makes sense.

My cat likes to sleep underneath my covers.

Note: “My cat likes to sleep” makes sense.

Commas Needed

To start a sentence: During the summer months, many PBA mission trips are held.

Note: "...Many PBA mission trips are held" makes sense.

Listing three or more prepositional phrases:

Nemo swam down the drain, out the pipe, and into the ocean.

Note: "Nemo swam" makes sense.

Not Functioning as a Preposition

If the preposition does not have an object, or a noun that the action is directed toward, then it is not functioning as a preposition. The words in the list above *can* function as a preposition but are *not always* functioning prepositions.

To be, rather than *to seem* is the state motto of North Carolina.

Note: "to" in this sentence is not functioning as a preposition because it lacks an object. Here, it is functioning as an infinitive.