

English Grammar – Dependent Prepositions

Many verbs demand a specific preposition, and we call them “dependent prepositions”, since the proposition depends on the verb. When you watch TV or a film in English, or listen to music, pay attention to the verb/preposition combinations.

Here are some examples:

accuse of	excel at	reply to
admit to	forget about *	respond to
agree with/on	give to *	say to *
approve of	go to	search for
argue with	guard against	sell to *
argue against	hope for *	send to *
arrest for	independent of	sentence to
ask for *	insist on	step on
believe in *	interfere with/in	struggle with/against
belong to	invest in	subscribe to
buy for *	listen to	succeed at
buy from	long for	suffer from/with
care for	look after	talk to/with
charge with	look at	think about/of
consist of	look for	trade with
convict of	move to *	trust in *
cope with	object to	vote for
count on	participate in	wait for *
deal with	pay for *	warn about *
decide on	prepare for	work for *
depend on	protect against	work on
disagree with	receive from *	worry about
disapprove of	refer to	write to
dream about/of	rely on	

* these verbs can also be used without the prepositions

Due to the necessity of a specific preposition after some verbs, some sentences and questions finish with a preposition. For example:

- I don't like to be depended **on**.
- I don't know what he is looking **for**.
- I fear that I'll be discriminated **against**.
- This is the type of company that I like to invest **in**.
- What are you hoping **for**?
- There's nothing that I wouldn't admit **to**.
- What was he arrested **for**?
- What are you listening **to**?
- What are you accusing me **of**?
- There is a white wall which you can draw **on**.
- This is the wood that it was made **from**.
- This is the exam that you must prepare **for**.

In formal English, the prepositions are in a different place:

- This is the type of company **in which** I like to invest.
- **For what** are you hoping?
- There's nothing **to which** I wouldn't admit.
- **For what** was he arrested?
- **To what** are you listening?
- **Of what** are you accusing me?
- There is a white wall **on which** you can draw.
- This is the wood **from which** it was made.
- This is the exam **for which** you must prepare.

Some short English phrases also require specific prepositions. For example:

- to be absent **from**
- to be afraid **of**
- to be anxious **about**
- to be ashamed **of**
- to be capable **of**
- to be concerned **about**
- to have concerns **about**
- to be confused **by/about**
- to be critical **of**
- to be due **for**
- to be eligible **for**
- to be familiar **with**
- to be good/bad **at**
- to be good **for**
- to be influenced **by**
- to be interested **in**
- to be late **for**
- to be married **to**
- to get married **to**
- to be proud **of**
- to be responsible **for**
- to be right/wrong **about**
- to be shocked **by**
- to be sick **of**
- to be successful **at**
- to be sure **about**
- to take care **of**
- to be tired **of**
- to be used **to**
- to get used **to**
- to be worried **about**
- to have the right **to**
- to pay attention **to**
- to show interest **in**

Video suggestions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cCh0EDHKTcc> (7 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/4UHDZpkbfWE> (1 minute)

Vocabulary used in first video:

depend on	meet with	believe in	hear about	add to
work on	disagree with	participate in	complain about	explain to
count on	concern with	succeed in	talk about	talk to
agree on	compare with	result in	care about	adapt to
rely on	deal with	specialize in	be about	commit to
insist on	help with		worry about	speak to
concentrate on	confuse with	come from	think about	object to
blame on	sympathize with	recover from	feel about	listen to
spend on		escape from	argue about	react to
congratulate on	glance at	borrow from	boast about	lead to
	look at		forget about	apologize to
think of		apologize for		show to
disapprove of		prepare for		

Exercise. Complete the following sentences with the correct prepositions:

1. Geoffrey has been promoted and is now responsible _____ national sales.
2. I have always taken care _____ my sick mother.
3. We are thinking _____ taking a trip to the USA next year.
4. I have never subscribed _____ a magazine.
5. Talk _____ me! Please don't just ignore me!
6. I am always confused _____ English pronunciation.
7. The little boy asked his mother _____ a lollipop.
8. My decision depends _____ what you have to offer.
9. I have always been interested _____ languages.
10. Fortunately, you can always count _____ Reginald.
11. My aunt has always suffered _____ back pain.
12. I really must prepare _____ my test tomorrow.
13. My life consists _____ work, work and more work!
14. Every weekend I go _____ the cinema with my friends.
15. This is not my problem! Deal _____ it yourself!
16. Who are you going to promote to manager? You must decide _____ someone!
17. I'm sorry - I really don't approve _____ your choice.
18. I disagree _____ you, but I'm not going to argue _____ you about it.
19. Please help me to look _____ my cell phone - I've lost it!
20. I want you to always look _____ me when I'm talking _____ you.
21. Peter is married _____ Susan.
22. I participate _____ many meetings every day.