

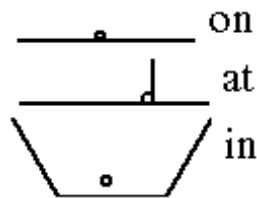
# An Activity for Teaching Prepositions Associated with Time

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- Use:
  - Many language learners have a problem learning the prepositions associated with references to year, month, date and hour. The following activity is based on the explanation of prepositions of place provided in *A University Grammar of English*, as represented by the diagram.



- Teaching:
  - Provide students with the diagram and an explanation regarding the meaning of these prepositions when teaching prepositions of place and direction e.g.
    - I'll meet AT the bus stop ON Main Street.
    - The tickets will be IN and envelope ON my desk.
    - The bus stopped AT the traffic light.
  - When working on references to time use the diagram again, but this time bring a diary or calendar, which has slots for hourly appointments. Ask students to consider the following.
    - A year is a SPACE, and so is a MONTH or a WEEK. Therefore they would require the preposition IN. e.g. IN 1997, IN August, IN the third week of August.
    - Next, you would show that the actual date is a column or line IN that week/month and thus requires ON Monday.
    - The hour would be a point on the day line and thus require AT, as in AT 6 a.m., AT 16:30 IN the afternoon.
- Practice:
  1. Tell students to walk around the class and find out exactly when people were born and see if they can find someone who was born IN the same year, or the same month, or perhaps ON the same day. (at night is, of course, an exception-language not being math).
  2. Students report their findings, who they interviewed, and when that person was born.
  3. Provide a fill-in exercise or cloze passage which makes references to dates (year, month, day and time). You can use an incident such as what happened to the Titanic on the night it sank, or a dialogue between two busy people trying to set up an appointment.