

# Mastering Those Annoying Little Prepositions<sup>1</sup>

## In, on, & at

I live <b>in</b> Florida. I was born <b>in</b> Antarctica. I work <b>in</b> Orlando. My brother is <b>in</b> space. My cabin is <b>in</b> the mountains.	<i><b>In:</b> surrounded by something, contained by something.</i>
There is dust <b>on</b> the tv screen. We flew to Hawaii <b>on</b> a jet.	<i><b>On:</b> touching, supported by, hanging from, connected with, on top of.</i>
I live <b>at</b> 1234 Alafaya Trail. I shop <b>at</b> Walmart. I always eat <b>at</b> Macdonald's. We live <b>at</b> the end of the road.	<i><b>At:</b> used to indicate a point in space, the location of someone/something.</i>

## To

I went <b>to</b> the mall today. The player threw the ball <b>to</b> her teammate.	<i><b>To:</b> in the direction of and reaching, as far as.</i>
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## To is not always a preposition

*To is not a preposition when it is part of the infinitive. The infinitive is: **to** + the simple form of the verb. The simple form of the verb is a verb without **-s**, **-ed**, or **-ing** endings, e.g., walk, study, want. The infinitives of these words are: to walk, to study, to want.*

I tried <b>to</b> climb the tree. The bird began <b>to</b> sing.
I want <b>to</b> eat. We like <b>to</b> go shopping. The children have <b>to</b> sleep at night. Everyone needs <b>to</b> breathe.

## Into

We put the groceries <b>into</b> the bag. The snake crawled <b>into</b> the closet.	<i><b>Into:</b> to the inside of</i>
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<sup>1</sup> Drawn from Gloria Wahlen's *Prepositions Illustrated*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1995.