



GRAMMATICAL RANGE IN THE SPEAKING TEST

In the Speaking Test you will be required to use a range of grammatical structures. You will be tested on how accurate your use of these structures is. There are some grammatical patterns in English which can be problematic. This is particularly true of word forms which have dependent prepositions. Reviewing the patterns and practising the particular use of prepositions in the various combinations can help avoid errors.

IELTS Tip

Practise using word forms which have dependent prepositions.

These structures can be problematic so it is best to memorise their uses and meanings.

Memorising them can also help reduce the number of errors that frequently occur in these kinds of structures.

There are many verbs, adjectives and nouns which are used with particular prepositions. The choice of preposition is often dependent on the word that precedes it. Because there are no strict rules that tell you which preposition to use, it is best to memorise the most common usage.

Dependent preposition patterns

There are three main patterns:

- verb + preposition
- noun + preposition
- adjective/participle + preposition

Verb + preposition

Here is a list of common verbs and the prepositions that follow.

Verb	Preposition
complain, know, learn, talk, think, write Example: You will need to write about the effects of global warming.	about
account, apologise, apply, hope, look, pay, prepare, wait, watch, wish Example: Watch for the huge bulletin board then turn right.	for
consist, take care, think Example: The process consists of three stages: preparing, baking and decorating.	of
agree, count, depend, rely Example: I know I can always depend on your support.	on
apologise, belong, complain, speak, talk, write Example: I will speak to the guidance counsellor.	to
agree, be, comply, deal, go out, stay Example: I always go out with my friends on Friday nights.	with

There are some verbs that are followed by a direct object first and then the preposition.

verb + **direct object** + **preposition** + indirect object

Example: She blamed **the technician** **for** not fixing the computer.
 (= blame someone **for** something)

John blamed **the inferior workmanship** **on** the plumber.
 (= blame something **on** someone)

The following verbs can also follow this pattern.

advise <i>someone</i> against <i>something</i>	help <i>someone</i> with <i>something</i>
advise <i>someone</i> of <i>something</i>	make <i>something</i> for <i>someone</i>
ask <i>someone</i> for <i>something</i>	persuade <i>someone</i> of <i>something</i>
blame <i>someone</i> for <i>something</i>	praise <i>someone</i> for <i>something</i>
blame <i>something</i> on <i>someone</i>	present <i>someone</i> with <i>something</i>
borrow <i>something</i> from <i>someone</i>	present <i>something</i> to <i>someone</i>
congratulate <i>someone</i> on <i>something</i>	provide <i>someone</i> with <i>something</i>
convince <i>someone</i> of <i>something</i>	provide <i>something</i> for <i>someone</i>
criticise <i>someone</i> for <i>something</i>	supply <i>someone</i> with <i>something</i>
describe <i>something</i> to <i>someone</i>	supply <i>something</i> for/to <i>someone</i>
discuss <i>something</i> with <i>someone</i>	thank <i>someone</i> for <i>something</i>
divide <i>something</i> into <i>something</i>	warn <i>someone</i> about/against <i>something</i>
explain <i>something</i> to <i>someone</i>	welcome <i>someone</i> to <i>something</i>

Examples:

The travel agent **advised her against** travelling to the jungle.
 The travel agent **advised her of** the dangers in the jungle.
 They **borrowed the materials from** Sam.
 I'd like to **discuss the new program with** you today, if possible.
 It will be necessary to **provide the students with** some stationery.
 It will be necessary to **provide some stationery for** the students.
 Please **thank Liz for** her kindness.

Noun + preposition

Here is a list of nouns with the prepositions that normally follow.

Noun	Preposition
anger, anxiety, excitement, information, question, worry Example: I received the information about the changes to the bus schedules yesterday.	about
insurance, safeguard Example: It is compulsory to get insurance against theft.	against
difference Example: The difference between the two portfolios is not that great.	between
apology, application, cheque/check, demand, excuse, explanation, ideas, need, reason, request, responsibility, taste Example: I put in my application for a visa to China over a week ago.	for

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advantage, belief, change, decrease, delay, difficulty, drop, experience, fall, increase, interest, problem, purpose, rise, success	in
Example: The delay in fixing the road caused problems for commuters in the morning peak.	
advantage, awareness, benefit, cause, decrease, effect, example, experience, fall, hope, idea, impact, increase, knowledge, lack, matter, opinion, possibility, problem, proof, purpose, rise, way	of
Example: You will need proof of identity at the airport.	
advice, effect, impact	on
Example: His advice on travelling in the desert was appreciated.	
alternative, answer, damage, invitation, objection, reply, solution	to
Example: There was no answer to my previous email.	
experience, relationship, satisfaction, trouble	with
Example: Jane ended her relationship with Peter.	

Adjective/participles + preposition

Here is a list of some of the more common adjectives with the prepositions that normally follow.

Adjective/participle	Preposition
annoyed, concerned, doubtful, enthusiastic, excited, pleased, serious, sorry, upset, worried	about
Example: Alice was so excited about getting her new car.	
amazed, annoyed, awful, bad, clever, good, shocked, skilled, terrible	at
Example: I was shocked at the news of the car accident.	
amazed, concerned, excited, impressed, made, shocked	by
Example: We were impressed by her dancing skills.	
available, bad, concerned, eager, famous, good, responsible, suitable	for
Example: The restaurant is famous for its chocolate cake.	
made	from
Example: The basket is made from grass.	
deficient, disappointed, engaged, interested, lacking, rich, successful	in
Example: James was successful in winning the snowboarding championship.	
afraid, aware, capable, characteristic, confident, fond, frightened, guilty, hopeful, jealous, made, proud, scared, short, suspicious, tired	of
Example: Susan is very fond of chocolates.	
addicted, attached, available, bad, close, compared, contrary, different, engaged, good, grateful, harmful, kind, mean, nice, opposed, polite, related, rude, similar, subject	to
Example: Previous exam papers were made available to students.	
annoyed, bored, compared, concerned, crowded, disappointed, impressed, pleased, popular, satisfied	with
Example: Surprisingly, the children were bored with the new computer game.	