

Verb + preposition: depend on, listen to, wait for

CEFR B1-B2 · 20 questions · A4 / US Letter

A verb and its preposition form a fixed pair: depend on, listen to, wait for, agree with. Learn the pair with one example and use it as a single unit.

The rule

The verb and preposition form a unit

- English fixes a preposition to many verbs: depend on, listen to, wait for.
- The preposition is not about place or time; it is part of the verb.
- Learn the pair together and repeat it with a full example sentence.
- A wrong preposition makes the sentence sound foreign even when the meaning is clear.

Pairs with on, to and for

- Depend on and rely on: "It depends on the weather."
- Listen to and talk to: "Listen to the teacher."
- Wait for and look for: "We are waiting for the bus."
- Belong to and refer to: "This book belongs to me."

Pairs with at, in and about

- Arrive at a place and arrive in a city or country: "We arrived at the hotel."
- Believe in and succeed in: "She believes in hard work."
- Think about and talk about: "We talked about the plan."
- Succeed in and be interested in take an -ing verb: "He succeeded in passing."

Pairs with of, from and with

- Think of and dream of: "I thought of you."
- Come from and borrow from: "She comes from Canada."
- Agree with a person: "I agree with you."
- Help with and share with: "Can you help me with this?"

Word order and the -ing form

- A preposition is followed by a noun or an -ing verb: "depend on getting".
- The preposition stays with the verb, even in questions: "What are you waiting for?"
- Some verbs take more than one pattern: "agree with someone", "agree to a plan".
- Never add an extra preposition: "discuss the plan", not "discuss about the plan".

Questions

Write your answer on the line under each question. Check your work with the answer key on the last page.

1. It depends ___ the weather.

2. Listen ___ the instructions.

3. We are waiting ___ the bus.

4. This book belongs ___ my sister.

5. We arrived ___ the hotel at noon.

6. She believes ___ hard work.

7. They talked ___ the problem.

8. He succeeded ___ passing the test.

9. I agree ___ your idea.

10. Can you help me ___ the bags?

11. She comes ___ Canada.

12. I could not think ___ the right word.

13. We need someone we can rely ____.

14. The team consists ____ five players.

15. She is interested ____ learning Japanese.

16. Please write ____ me as soon as you arrive.

17. The film reminds me ____ my childhood.

18. He apologised ____ being late.

19. We are looking forward ____ the weekend.

20. I will pay ____ the tickets.

Answer key

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1. **on** — Depend is a fixed verb and preposition pair with on.
2. **to** — Listen takes the preposition to before the thing you hear.
3. **for** — Wait for is the fixed pair for something you expect.
4. **to** — Belong takes the preposition to before the owner.
5. **at** — Arrive takes at for a building or a small place, never to.
6. **in** — Believe in takes an idea or a value.
7. **about** — Talk about takes the topic of the conversation.
8. **in** — Succeed in takes the -ing form of the action.
9. **with** — Agree with takes a person or an opinion.
10. **with** — Help with takes the task or the object that needs work.
11. **from** — Come from names the origin, so the preposition is from.
12. **of** — Think of means find or remember an idea or a word.
13. **on** — Rely is a fixed verb and preposition pair with on.
14. **of** — Consist of is the fixed pair for the parts of a whole.
15. **in** — Interested in takes the topic, and a following verb takes -ing.
16. **to** — Write to takes the person who receives the message.
17. **of** — Remind of is the fixed verb and preposition pair.
18. **for** — Apologise for takes the action that caused the apology.
19. **to** — Look forward to is the fixed three-part phrase, and to takes a noun.
20. **for** — Pay for takes the thing that is bought.