

Prepositional Phrases: Practice sentences 1 - 7

1. My niece is mad at me.

2. She isn't interested in ducks, elephants, or cobras, but she's crazy about toads.

3. My own experiences with toads have been sticky at best, so I never mention them in my example or practice sentences without resentment.

4. In my youth, a toad was responsible for my getting into really big trouble with the college authorities.

5. This toad, an insectology major and one of my chess-playing buddies, tried out for the position of goalie on the ice hockey team.

6. The coach was shocked at the thought of a toad on skates.

7. But he liked my suggestion of the toad's operating as a disguised animated puck.

Prepositional Phrases: Practice sentences 8 - 13

8. During practice, the toad easily slipped right past the goal tender nine tries out of ten.

9. But during the first period of the first league game this fugitive from the bush savagely bit the opposing goalie on the nose and was given ten minutes in the penalty box.

10. For the first nine minutes of the penalty, he sulked in sullen silence on the railing of the box.

11. Then suddenly he sprang into the referee's pocket, put the official's whistle between his lips, and blew like mad.

12. After the ensuing riot, the Dean of amphibians placed the toad on probation and left him scowling at the bottom of a crate of blowflies.

13. In revenge he ate his way through the college's priceless collection of preserved bugs and decamped.

Prepositional Phrases: Answers to Sentences 1 - 7

1. My **niece is mad** (at me).
[1 modifies *mad*.]

2. **She isn't interested** (in ducks, elephants, or cobras), but **she's crazy** (about toads).
[1 modifies *interested*. 2 modifies *crazy*.]

3. My own **experiences** (with toads) **have been sticky** (at best), so I never **mention them** (in my example or practice sentences) (without resentment).
[1 modifies *experiences*. 2 modifies *sticky*. 3 and 4 each modify *mention*.]

4. (In my youth), a **toad was responsible** (for my getting (into really big trouble (with the college authorities))).
[1 modifies *responsible*; 2-3-4 also modifies *responsible*. 3 modifies *getting*. 4 modifies *trouble*.]

5. This **toad**, an insectology **major** and **one** (of my chess-playing buddies), **tried out** (for the position (of goalie (on the ice hockey team))).
[1 modifies *one*. (2-3-4) modifies *tried out*. 3 modifies *position*. 4 modifies *goalie*. *Toad*, *insectology major* and *one* are all in apposition; they're the subjects of *tried out*.]

6. The **coach was shocked** (at the thought (of a toad (on skates))).
[(1-2-3) modifies *shocked*. 2 modifies *thought*. 3 modifies *toad*.]

7. But **he liked** my **suggestion** (of the toad's operating (as a disguised animated puck)).
[1-2 modifies *suggestion*. 2 modifies *operating*.]

Prepositional Phrases: Answers to Sentences 8 - 13

8. (During practice), the ¹toad easily ²slipped (right past the goal tender) ³nine tries (out of ten).
 [1 and 2 each modify *slipped*. 3 modifies *tries*, a noun derived from a verb. *Tries* is an adverbial noun modifying *slipped*.]

9. But (during the first period (of the first league game)) this ¹fugitive (from the bush) ²savagely ³bit the opposing ⁴goalie (on the nose) and ⁵was given ten minutes (in the penalty box).
 [1-2 and 4 modify *bit*. 2 modifies *period*. 3 modifies *fugitive*. 5 modifies *was given*.]

10. (For the first nine minutes (of the penalty)), ¹he ²sulked (in sullen silence) (on the railing ³of the box) ⁴).
 [1-2, 3, and 4-5 all modify *sulked*. 5 modifies *railing*.]

11. Then suddenly ¹he ²sprang (into the referee's pocket), ³put the official's ⁴whistle (between his lips), and ⁵blew (like mad).
 [1 modifies *sprang*. 2 modifies *put*. 3 modifies *blew*.]

12. (After the ensuing riot) the ¹Dean (of amphibians) ²put the ³toad (on probation) and ⁴left ⁵him ⁶scowling (at the bottom (of a crate (of blowflies))).
 [1 and 3 modify *put*. 2 modifies *Dean*. 4-5-6 modifies *scowling*. 5 modifies *bottom*. 6 modifies *crate*. *Scowling* is an adjective (made from a verb) modifying *him*.]

13. (In revenge) ¹he ²ate his ³way (through the college's priceless collection (of preserved bugs)) and ⁴decamped.
 [1 and 2-3 modify *ate*. 3 modifies *collection*.]

Directions for Particle Verbs

Some of the finite verbs in the following sentences are **particle verbs** and some are regular verbs followed by **prepositional phrases**.

1. Mark structural backbones:

Color just the main word of subjects of finite verbs **blue**.

Color auxiliary verbs and main verbs **red**. *If the finite verb is a particle verb, color the particle red also.*

Color just the main word of completers of finite verbs **green**.

2. Place round brackets () around prepositional phrases and indicate what word each prepositional phrase modifies.

1 2

We asked (for a room (with a view)).

[A nested prepositional phrase: 1-2 modifies *asked*. 2 modifies *room*.]

Hey, Hercules! Did **you clear** that **stable out** yet?

[*Clear out* is a particle verb. We can also say *clear out that stable* and must say *clear it out*.]

Particle Verbs: Sentences 1 - 11

1. All afternoon we tossed around old jokes.
2. You can't depend on those lazy demigods.
3. Those stupid vultures never even took off the wrapping.
4. Those stupid vultures never even took off.
5. Fang can never get up on time.
6. I put off my wresting match with Jumbo.
7. Get up that ladder, Jumbo!
8. She'll never live down her embarrassment.
9. She's living down the street.
10. We've completely run out of vulture chow.
11. They should run him out of town.

Particle Verbs: Answers to sentences 1 – 11

1. All afternoon **we tossed around** old **jokes**.

[*Toss around* is a particle verb: we can also say *tossed old jokes around*, and if we substitute a pronoun for *jokes*, we must say *tossed them around*.]

1

2. **You can't depend** (on those lazy demigods).

[1 modifies *can't depend*.]

3. Those stupid **vultures** never even **took off** the **wrapping**.

[*Take off* is a particle verb with two different meanings depending on whether it takes a completer or not. Here it means "remove."]

4. Those stupid **vultures** never even **took off**.

[Here *took off* means "leave the ground."]

1

5. **Fang can** never **get up** (on time).

[A particle verb without a completer. 1 modifies *get up*.]

1

6. **I put off** my wrestling **match** (with Jumbo).

[1 modifies *put off*, a particle verb.]

1

7. **Get** (up that ladder), Jumbo!

[1 modifies *get*.]

8. **She'll** never **live down** her **embarrassment**.

[A particle verb with a completer: *live down* means "getting past people's memories of some mistake or misdeed."]

1

9. **She's living** (down the street).

[1 modifies *is living*.]

1

10. **We've** completely **run out** (of vulture chow).

[1 modifies *run out*, *Run out* is a particle verb meaning "used up our entire supply." It doesn't take a completer.]

1

11. **They should run him** (out of town).

[1 modifies *should run*; *out of* is a preposition.]