

Prepositions of Place: at, in, on

In general, we use:

- **at** for a POINT
- **in** for an ENCLOSED SPACE
- **on** for a SURFACE (horizontal/vertical)

Notice the use of the prepositions of place **at**, **in** and **on** in these standard expressions:

at	in	on
at home	in a car	on a bus
at work	in a taxi	on a train
at school	in a helicopter	on a plane
at university	in a boat	on a ship
at college	in a lift (elevator)	on a bicycle, on a motorbike
at the top	in the newspaper	on a horse, on an elephant
at the bottom	in the sky	on the radio, on television
at the side	in a row	on the left, on the right
at reception	in Oxford Street	on the way

Notice the use of the preposition of time **at** in the following standard expressions:

Expression	Example
at night	The stars shine at night .

at the weekend*	I don't usually work at the weekend .
at Christmas*/Easter	I stay with my family at Christmas .
at the same time	We finished the test at the same time .
at present	He's not home at present . Try later.

*Note that in some varieties of English people say "on the weekend" and "on Christmas".

Prepositions of Time - at, in, on

We use:

- **at** for a PRECISE TIME
- **in** for MONTHS, YEARS, CENTURIES and LONG PERIODS
- **on** for DAYS and DATES

at PRECISE TIME	in MONTHS, YEARS, CENTURIES and LONG PERIODS	on DAYS and DATES
at 3 o'clock	in May	on Sunday
at 10.30am	in summer	on Tuesdays
at noon	in the summer	on 6 March
at dinnertime	in 1990	on 25 Dec. 2010

at bedtime	in the 1990s	on Christmas Day
at sunrise	in the next century	on Independence Day
at sunset	in the Ice Age	on my birthday
at the moment	in the past/future	on New Year's Eve