

A

Compare **at**, **on** and **in**:

- They arrived **at 5 o'clock**.
- They arrived **on Friday**.
- They arrived **in June**. / They arrived **in 2012**.

We use:

**at** for the time of day

**at five o'clock**    **at 11.45**    **at midnight**    **at lunchtime**    **at sunset**    etc.

**on** for days and dates

**on Friday** / **on Fridays**    **on 16 May 2012**    **on New Year's Day**    **on my birthday**

**in** for longer periods (months/years/seasons etc.)

**in June**    **in 2012**    **in the 1990s**    **in the 20th century**    **in the past**    **in winter**

B

We say:

**at the moment** / **at the minute** / **at present** / **at this time** (= now):

- Can we talk later? I'm busy **at the moment**.

**at the same time**

- Kate and I arrived **at the same time**.

**at the weekends** / **at weekends** (or **on the weekend** / **on weekends** in American English):

- Will you be here **at the weekend**? (or ... **on the weekend**)

**at Christmas** (but **on Christmas Day**)

- Do you give each other presents **at Christmas**?

**at night** (= during nights in general), **in the night** (= during a particular night):

- I don't like working **at night**. but I was woken up by a noise **in the night**.

C

We say:

**in the morning(s)**  
**in the afternoon(s)**  
**in the evening(s)**

but

**on Friday morning(s)**  
**on Sunday afternoon(s)**  
**on Monday evening(s)** etc.

- I'll see you **in the morning**.
- Do you work **in the evenings**?

- I'll see you **on Friday morning**.
- Do you work **on Saturday evenings**?

D

We do not use **at/on/in** before **last/next/this/every**:

- I'll see you **next Friday**. (not on next Friday)
- They got married **last June**.

We often leave out **on** before days. So you can say:

- I'll see you **on Friday**. or I'll see you **Friday**.
- I don't work **on Monday mornings**. or I don't work **Monday mornings**.

E

We say that something will happen **in a few minutes** / **in six months** etc.:

- The train will be leaving **in a few minutes**. (= a few minutes from now)
- Andy has gone away. He'll be back **in a week**. (= a week from now)
- They'll be here **in a moment**. (= a moment from now, very soon)

We also use **in ...** to say how long it takes to do something:

- I learnt to drive **in four weeks**. (= it took me four weeks to learn)

# Exercises

## 121.1 Put in at, on or in.

- 1 Mozart was born in Salzburg in 1756.
- 2 I've been invited to a wedding ..... 14 February.
- 3 Amy's birthday is ..... May, but I don't know which date.
- 4 This park is popular and gets very busy ..... weekends.
- 5 I haven't seen Kate for a few days. I last saw her ..... Tuesday.
- 6 Jonathan is 63. He'll be retiring from his job ..... two years.
- 7 I'm busy right now. I'll be with you ..... a moment.
- 8 Sam isn't here ..... the moment, but he'll be here this afternoon.
- 9 There are usually a lot of parties ..... New Year's Eve.
- 10 I don't like the dark. I try to avoid going out ..... night.
- 11 It rained very hard ..... the night. Did you hear it?
- 12 My car is being repaired at the garage. It will be ready ..... two hours.
- 13 The bus station was busy. A lot of buses were leaving ..... the same time.
- 14 Helen and David always go out for dinner ..... their wedding anniversary.
- 15 It was a short book and easy to read. I read it ..... a day.
- 16 ..... midday, the sun is at its highest point in the sky.
- 17 This building is very old. It was built ..... the fifteenth century.
- 18 The office is closed ..... Wednesday afternoons.
- 19 In the UK many people go home to see their families ..... Christmas.
- 20 My flight arrives ..... 5 o'clock ..... the morning.
- 21 The course begins ..... 7 January and ends sometime ..... April.
- 22 I might not be at home ..... Tuesday morning, but I'll be there ..... the afternoon.

## 121.2 Complete the sentences. Use at, on or in + the following:

the evening	about 20 minutes	<del>1756</del>	the same time	the 1920s
the moment	21 July 1969	night	Saturdays	11 seconds

- 1 Mozart was born in 1756 .....
- 2 If the sky is clear, you can see the stars .....
- 3 After working hard during the day, I like to relax .....
- 4 Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon .....
- 5 It's difficult to listen if everyone is speaking .....
- 6 Jazz became popular in the United States .....
- 7 I'm just going out to the shop. I'll be back .....
- 8 I don't think we need an umbrella. It's not raining .....
- 9 Ben is a very fast runner. He can run 100 metres .....
- 10 Lisa works from Monday to Friday. Sometimes she also works .....

## 121.3 Which is correct: a, b, or both of them?

- |  |                                      |             |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 a I'll see you on Friday.            | b I'll see you Friday.               | <u>both</u> |
| 2 a I'll see you on next Friday.       | b I'll see you next Friday.          | <u>b</u>    |
| 3 a Paul got married in April.         | b Paul got married April.            | .....       |
| 4 a I play tennis on Sunday mornings.  | b I play tennis Sunday mornings.     | .....       |
| 5 a We were ill at the same time.      | b We were ill in the same time.      | .....       |
| 6 a What are you doing at the weekend? | b What are you doing on the weekend? | .....       |
| 7 a Oliver was born at 10 May 1993.    | b Oliver was born on 10 May 1993.    | .....       |
| 8 a He left school last June.          | b He left school in last June.       | .....       |
| 9 a Will you be here on Tuesday?       | b Will you be here Tuesday?          | .....       |
| 10 a I don't like driving in night.    | b I don't like driving at night.     | .....       |

## A on time and in time

**on time** = punctual, not late

If something happens **on time**, it happens at the time that was planned:

- The 11.45 train left **on time**. (= it left at 11.45)
- Please be **on time**. Don't be late.
- The conference was well-organised. Everything began and finished **on time**.

**in time** (for something / to do something) = soon enough

- Will you be home **in time for dinner**? (= soon enough for dinner)
- I sent Amy a birthday present. I hope it arrives **in time**. (= on or before her birthday)
- I'm in a hurry. I want to get home **in time to watch** the game on TV. (= soon enough to see the game)

The opposite of **in time** is **too late**:

- I got home **too late** to watch the game on TV.

You can say **just in time** (= almost too late):

- We got to the station **just in time** for our train.
- A child ran into the road in front of the car, but I managed to stop **just in time**.

## B at the end and in the end

**at the end** (of something) = at the time when something ends

For example:

- |                                |                                 |                                  |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>at the end of the month</b> | <b>at the end of January</b>    | <b>at the end of the game</b>    |
| <b>at the end of the film</b>  | <b>at the end of the course</b> | <b>at the end of the concert</b> |
- I'm going away **at the end of January / at the end of the month**.
  - At the end of the concert**, everyone applauded.
  - The players shook hands **at the end of the game**.

We do not say 'in the end of ...'. For example, we do not say 'in the end of January'.

The opposite of **at the end** is **at the beginning**:

- I'm going away **at the beginning of January**. (*not* in the beginning)

**in the end** = finally

We use **in the end** when we say what the final result of a situation was:

- We had a lot of problems with our car. We sold it **in the end**. (= finally we sold it)
- He got more and more angry. **In the end** he just walked out of the room.
- Alan couldn't decide where to go for his holidays. He didn't go anywhere **in the end**. (*not* at the end)

The opposite of **in the end** is **at first**:

- At first** we didn't get on very well, but **in the end** we became good friends.

## Exercises

122.1 Complete the sentences with **on time** or **in time**.

- The bus is usually on time, but it was late this morning.
- The film was supposed to start at 8.30, but it didn't begin .....
- The train service isn't very good. The trains are rarely .....
- We nearly missed our train. We got to the station just .....
- We want to start the meeting ....., so please don't be late.
- I've just washed this shirt. I want to wear it this evening, so I hope it will be dry .....
- I almost forgot that it was Joe's birthday. Fortunately I remembered .....
- Why are you never .....? You always keep everybody waiting.
- It is hoped that the new stadium will be ready ..... for the tournament later this year.

122.2 Read the situations and make sentences using **just in time**.

- A child ran into the road in front of your car. You saw the child at the last moment.  
(manage / stop) I managed to stop just in time.
- You were walking home. Just after you got home, it started to rain very heavily.  
(get / home) I .....
- Your friend was going to sit on the chair you had just painted. You said, 'Don't sit on that chair!', so he didn't. (stop / him) I .....
- You and a friend went to the cinema. You were late, and you thought you would miss the beginning of the film. But the film began just as you sat down in the cinema.  
(get / cinema / beginning / film)  
We .....

122.3 Complete the sentences using **at the end** + the following:

**the course**    ~~the game~~    **the interview**    **the month**    **the race**

- The players shook hands at the end of the game.
- I get paid .....
- The students had a party .....
- Two of the runners collapsed .....
- I was surprised when I was offered the job .....

122.4 Write sentences with **in the end**. Use the verb in brackets.

- We had a lot of problems with our car. (sell) In the end we sold it.
- Anna got more and more fed up with her job.  
(resign) .....
- I tried to learn Japanese, but I found it too difficult.  
(give up) .....
- We couldn't decide whether to go to the party or not.  
(not / go) .....

122.5 Put in **at** or **in**.

- I'm going away at the end of the month.
- It took Gary a long time to find work. .... the end he got a job as a bus driver.
- I couldn't decide what to buy Amy for her birthday. I didn't buy her anything ..... the end.
- I'm going away ..... the end of this week.
- We waited ages for a bus. .... the end we had to get a taxi.
- ..... the end of the lesson, all the students left the classroom.
- We had a few problems at first, but ..... the end everything was OK.
- You were in a difficult position. What did you do ..... the end?
- The journey took a very long time, but we got there ..... the end.
- Are you going away ..... the beginning of August or ..... the end?