

120+ Uses of 'in'

- Prepositions
- Collocations
- Adjectives + in
- Idioms
- Phrasal verbs

*PDF link below

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When talking about time, we use ‘in’ for an unspecified time of the day, a month, a season or a year.

“I always brush my teeth **in the morning.”**

“My birthday is **in June.”**

“It’s always cold **in winter.”**

“My brother was born **in 1999.”**

When talking about places, ‘in’ is used to indicate a location, place, or inside buildings.

“I used to live **in Canada.”**

“The city of Seoul is **in South Korea.”**

“I am **in my room.”**

Collocations (common word combination)

in custody = someone is arrested and at the police station.

“Is Robin still **in custody**?”

in prison = when someone has committed a serious crime

“Her uncle is **in prison** for murder.”

in hospital = when someone is ill

“She’s **in hospital** with cancer.”

in school = when someone is studying in school

“All her children are now **in school**.”

in church = when someone attends a religious service

“I think Esther’s **in church** at the moment.”

in court = when someone is in the courthouse in front of a judge

“John is a lawyer, but he doesn’t often speak **in court**.”

in bed = be in your bed

“On Sunday mornings, I like to grab a cup of coffee and read **in bed**.”

in traffic = driving with many cars

“I listen to podcasts when I’m stuck **in traffic**.”

in the mail

“The check is **in the mail. You should get it in a few days.”**

We can also use “in” when we refer to being in a place or position – but not necessarily in a physical place.

in place = ready, prepared

“The government has put many police **in place before the protest starts.”**

in order = organized, ready

“He put all his paperwork **in order before he moved abroad.”**

in position = when you are in the right place before an event

“All the players were **in position** before the football game started.”

in the same boat = to be in the same situation

“I’m **in the same boat** as you. I don’t know if I will get a good IELTS score.”

“**in**” expressions also describe the state, condition, or situation of a person or thing.

in shape = the physical condition of somebody/something

“Lots of people are trying to get **in shape** before summer.”

in a good / bad condition

“This car is in a really bad condition.”

in good / bad health

“My grandmother is still in good health.”

in a good / bad mood

“He’s in a bad mood today.”

in denial = refusal to accept a truth

“Dave was in denial about his drinking problem.”

in ruins = destroyed with some pieces or parts remaining

“The city was in ruins after the hurricane.”

in the dark = you do not know about something because you are not given information

“I have no idea what they’re planning. They always keep me **in the dark.**”

in the middle of something = you are busy working

“Sorry, I’m **in the middle of something.** I’ll call you back later.”

in touch = keep in contact

“How many of your friends from college do you keep **in touch** with?”

in tune with = understands

“Politicians are sometimes never in tune with their voters.”

in difficulty = experiencing a hard situation

“I found myself in difficulty paying rent this month.”

in trouble = often used when you have problem

“He’s in trouble with the police.”

in danger = in an unsafe situation

“He realized that his life was in danger.”

in a tight spot = when you have a problem (often financial)

“After he lost his job, he was **in a tight spot** for a couple of months.”

in tears = you are crying

“She was **in tears** when she heard the news.”

in a mess = disorganized (or very sad)

“My desk is **in a mess**. I need to tidy it up.”

“She was **in a mess** after her divorce.”

in control = to have authority over someone / something

“It is scary when the army is **in control** of a country”

in the wrong / in the right = to be at fault – or not at fault

“You know, he’s in the wrong. He should never have said that.”

“You’re in the right for hiding his beer.”

in vain = when you make an effort to do something, but you don’t get the result you want

“I prepared for my job interview in vain. They just called and said the position is no longer available.”

in pain = when a part of your body hurts

“The doctor asked the patient if he was in pain.”

in over your head = when you are in a situation that you don't have the experience to deal with

“I think I'm **in over my head** at work. I have to give a 30-minute presentation to the president of the company.”

in demand = when a lot of people want something

“The new teacher is **in demand!**”

in stock = available

“We don't have any more books **in stock.**”

in doubt = when something is under question

“Her loyalty is **in doubt.**”

in common = if you have something in common with another person, you share it with them

“He doesn’t have much **in common** with his cousin.”

in favor = you approve or support something

“I’m not **in favor** of the current government.”

in luck = to be fortunate

“You’re **in luck!** We’ve got this in a small size.”

Emotions/Reactions

in love = when you love someone very much

“Jack is **in love** with his wife.”

in hope = when you do something because you are hoping for it

“I entered the competition **in hope** of winning.”

in fear = when you feel afraid or scared

“She’s living **in fear** of her life.”

in wonder = when you feel amazed

“He looked at her **in wonder**. She was so beautiful.”

in awe = to feel amazement

“She was **in awe** of her English teacher.”

in someone's favor = be to someone's advantage

“This agreement works **in your favor**.”

in horror = when you are so scared by something

“I looked at the burglar **in horror**.”

in terror = when you are so scared by something

“The little girl ran away from the dog **in terror**.”

in surprise = when you're surprised

“She looked at him in surprise. He said, “I love you.”

Here are some common linking phrases with “in”:

in particular = to specify something

“He’s done a lot of work for charity. In particular, he’s volunteered a lot.”

in general = to generalize

“In general, when the clouds are dark, it means it’s going to rain.”

in addition = when there is something extra

“The company decided to give their workers a pay raise. **In addition**, they gave everyone two extra days of holiday a year.”

in conclusion = to conclude

“**In conclusion**, I’d like to say that the project was a great success.”

in summary = to summarize

“**In summary**, the launch was a success.”

in fact = to support your argument

“English is a difficult language to learn. **In fact**, there are too many different accents to understand.”

in case = if something happens in the future

“Take an umbrella **in case** it rains.”

We often use “in” with time expressions to show a period of time in the past or future.

in high school / college

“I got my first cell phone **in 1998** when I was **in high school.**”

in the end = finally

“**In the end**, the hero manages to rescue the hostages.”

in the meantime = while (often while you're waiting for something else to happen)

“I’m waiting to hear back from the interview. **In the meantime**, I’m still applying for other jobs.”

in a while = in a short period of time

“He went out, but he’ll be back **in a while**.”

in a minute = soon

“The doctor will be with you **in a minute**.”

in time = after a period of time has gone by

“**In time**, you’ll start to remember and use more vocabulary.”

in time = when something takes place at the last moment

“I submitted my homework **in time.**”

in season = when vegetables and fruit are ready to eat

“I love this time of year when strawberries are **in season.**”

in a hurry = when you don't have much time

“I'm sorry I can't help you now. **I'm in a hurry.**”

in advance = early or before a deadline or meeting

“You need to reserve the tickets **in advance.**”

“in” expressions can be used to express how something is done.

in style = in an impressive way

“When she travels, she does it in style. She always goes first class and takes a lot of luggage with her.”

in fashion = fashionable

“Texts are more in fashion now than emails.”

in disguise = when you try to hide who you really are and wear different clothes

“They attended the party **in disguise.**”

in detail = when you give more facts

“Can you tell me about it **in detail?**”

in depth = you go into great detail

“Tomorrow we’ll cover this topic **in depth.**”

in private = so other people cannot hear

“Can I talk to you for a moment **in private?**”

in return / in exchange = as an exchange for something

“She looked after their children for an evening, and **in return**, they gave her money.”

in secret = secretly

“They had a meeting **in secret**.”

in confidence = secret information is given to you

“You weren’t supposed to tell anyone that. I told you **in confidence**.”

in someone’s honor = when something is done to honor a person

“They held a party **in his honor**.”

in person = when you attend an event

“The President of the bank came to the dinner **in person.**”

in silence = silently / quietly

“The class sat **in silence.**”

in italics/bold

“***This sentence is in bold and in italics.***”

in writing = a contract agreement

“Were you able to get a firm offer **in writing?**”

Here are a couple of “in” phrases for money.

in cash = you pay in bills and coins

“You have to pay in cash in this shop.”

in debt = when you owe money

“He’s still in debt to the bank.”

EVEN MORE Collocations

result in = to cause something

“A stressful lifestyle can result in various illnesses.”

delay in (noun) = not as fast as it should be

“The storm resulted in many delays in deliveries.”

in a car accident / crash

“If you are in a serious car accident, make sure you call 911 right away.”

in a fight

“My husband and I got in a fight last night.”

in a group

“We’d rather do the presentation in a group.”

in a picture

“I look terrible **in pictures.”**

in agreement

“If we’re all **in agreement, let’s move on to the next item on our agenda.”**

in charge

“Who is **in charge of this shop?”**

in connection with

“The police have made an arrest **in connection with the shooting.”**

in one's life = talking about your whole life

“Rex was the best dog I've ever had **in my life.**”

in use = being used

“Some planes made in the '70s and '80s are still **in use** today.”

increase / decrease in = growth / loss

“In the 1990s, America saw a large **decrease in** crime.”

involved in = participate or connect

“I think we should all be more **involved in** our local communities.”

participate in = be active doing something

“Should children participate in social media?”

wait in line = stand and wait behind people

“I’d never wait in line for 15 hours to get a new iPhone.”

Adjective + in Collocations with Examples

comfortable in

“I don’t feel comfortable in high heels.”

connected in

“He was connected in some way with that fraud scandal a couple of years back.”

disappointed in

“I’m disappointed in your homework quality”

experienced in

“He’s very experienced in looking after animals.”

interested in

“He is interested in science.”

polite / impolite in

“He’s usually quite polite in my presence.”

present in

“There was a large crowd present in the auditorium.”

skilled in

“My mother is very skilled in dressmaking.”

slow in

“His songs were slow in becoming popular.”

successful in

“They were successful in winning the contract.”

talented in

“Some of my students are talented in fixing grammar.”

Homework

Write 10 sentences using 'in' in the comments section of this video.

Post homework on the Daily English Homework YouTube channel.

Homework Tips:

- 1. Check grammar + spelling**
- 2. Use a program like Google Docs or MS Word**
- 3. Write about yourself**
- 4. Be sincere and serious about your homework**
- 5. Post your homework in the comments section**
- 6. Help others in the comments section or whatsApp group**