

IDIOMATIC USE OF PREPOSITIONS

The use of prepositions can vary greatly between languages, even between two variants of a single language such as American English and British English. When a word phrase or expression is peculiar to a given language and cannot be understood from the individual meanings of its elements, it is called 'idiomatic.' Because idioms (idiomatic word patterns) cannot be deduced from a general knowledge of the words and their meaning, we need to simply memorize them. For native speakers of the language, this process usually happens unconsciously: certain word patterns just sound right. Non-native speakers may have to work at mastering idioms. Here are some common prepositional idioms of American English:

abide **by** a rule
abide **in** a place or state
accords **with**
according **to**
accuse **of** a crime
adapt **from** a source
adapt **to** a situation
afraid **of**
agree **on** a plan
agree **to** a proposal
agree **with** a person
angry **with**
aware **of**
based **on**
capable **of**
certain **of**
charge **for** a purchase
charge **with** a crime
concur **in** an opinion
contend **for** a principle
contend **with** a person
dependent **on**
differ **about** or **over** a question
differ **from** in some quality
differ **with** a person
disappointed **by** or **in** a person
disappointed **in** or **with** a thing
familiar **with**
identical **with** or **to**
impatient **at** someone's conduct

impatient **of** restraint
impatient **for** something to happen
impatient **with** a person
independent **of**
infer **from**
inferior **to**
involved **in** a task
involved **with** a person
oblivious **of** or **to** one's surroundings
oblivious **of** something forgotten
occupied **by** a person
occupied **in** study
occupied **with** a thing
opposed **to**
part **from** a person
part **with** a possession
prior **to**
related **to**
rewarded **by** the judge's decision
rewarded **for** something done
rewarded **with** a gift
similar **to**
superior **to**
wait **at** a place
wait **for** a train, a person
wait **on** a customer