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