

1 You use at with:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a clock times | at ten o'clock, at midnight |
| b meals | at breakfast |
| c religious festivals: | at Christmas, at Easter |



And notice these special expressions:

at the weekend at the moment at that time at night at the end of the month

2 You use in with:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| a months | in January, in September |
| b years | in 1988, in the year 2001 |
| c centuries | in the fourteenth century, in the last century |
| d parts of the day | in the morning, in the evening |
| e seasons | in the spring, in winter |



It often snows in winter.

3 You use on with:

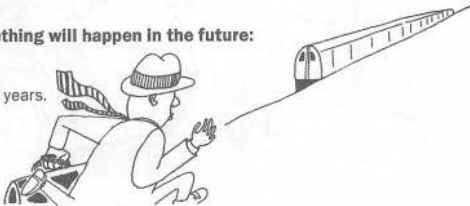
- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a days | on Monday, on Sunday |
| b parts of specific days | on Tuesday evening |
| c special days | on New Year's Day, on Christmas Eve |
| d dates | on Friday 13th, on the ninth of May |
| e special occasions | on my birthday, on our anniversary |



... on my birthday.

4 You also use in to talk about when something will happen in the future:

I'm busy now, so I'll talk to you in ten minutes.
They say he will be an important person in a few years.



The London train leaves in two minutes.

5 Be careful! We do not use at, in or on before words like this, next, last, or every, or before today and tomorrow:

We'll see you next week sometime.
What are you doing this weekend, John?



We go camping almost every summer.

A Look at the following lists. Each one has a word or expression which does not belong in the group because it takes a different preposition. Can you find which one?

e.g. ... night, Tuesday, Christmas, the end of the morning.

We say *at night*, *at Christmas* and *at the end of the morning*, so Tuesday is the odd one out.

- 1 the morning, July, 1999, nine o'clock
- 2 May 31st, Friday morning, the weekend, Sunday
- 3 my sister's birthday, eight fifteen, the weekend, lunch
- 4 the twentieth of August, winter, Wednesday evening, Friday
- 5 December, the late afternoon, 1956, five o'clock

B Complete these sentences with *at*, *in*, or *on*:

- 1 I was born _____ 1975.
- 2 My birthday is _____ September.
- 3 My mother's birthday is _____ the seventeenth of January.
- 4 I wake up most mornings _____ half-past seven.
- 5 Last year we went on holiday _____ July.
- 6 I work best _____ the morning.

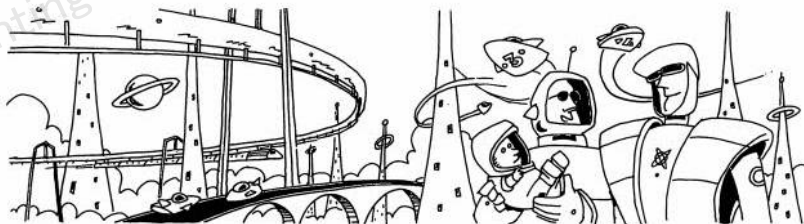


7 Yesterday I went to bed _____ midnight.

C Now write sentences like those in B with information about yourself.

D Complete the sentences using the most logical of these words or expressions:

at the moment at the end of the month at dinner on my birthday on the first of April
on Monday morning in the morning in the next century in August



- 1 Do you think life will be very different _____ ?
- 2 I was given this watch _____ .
- 3 It's traditional to play jokes on people _____ .
- 4 My grandmother would always wear her best clothes _____ .
- 5 It's very hot here _____ so most people go away on holiday.
- 6 Jeff slept badly so he felt very tired _____ .
- 7 I'm afraid Mr Markham is busy _____ . Can you wait a few minutes?