

Prepositions and connectors

English A2

What this topic teaches

You know prepositions of place (A1 topic 10). Now meet the time versions, plus the **connectors** – the glue that joins two ideas into one sentence.

- Time prepositions: **in** July, **on** Monday, **at** seven – the same zoom levels as place.
- Connectors: *and, but, so, because, when, if, although* – small words, whole sentences.
- Memory hook: a connector is a bridge . It has two ends, and both ends must land somewhere.

in, on, at: the time zoom

Preposition	Zoom level	Examples
in	the big containers	in July, in 2026, in the morning, in winter
on	days and dates	on Monday, on May 1st, on my birthday
at	exact points	at seven o'clock, at noon, at night, at the weekend

- Memory hook: the same zoom as place. *in* is a month or a year (a box); *on* is a day (a floor you stand on); *at* is a moment (a pin).
- $\triangle$ *in the morning* / *in the afternoon*, but ***at night***. English made one exception and put it in the most useful phrase. Of course it did.
- No preposition before *today, tomorrow, yesterday, tonight, next week, last year*: *I will see you ~on~ tomorrow*. These words bring their own time.

The basic four: and, but, so, because

Connector	The bridge	Example
and	adds	I like tea, and she likes coffee.
but	contrasts	I like tea, but I don't like coffee.
so	result	It was late, so I went home.
because	reason	I went home because it was late.

- *because* and *so* mean opposite directions of the same road: *because* points back at the reason, *so* points forward at the result.

- $\triangle$ **Use one, never both.** is perfect Chinese. English: *Because I was late, I went home* ✓ or *I was late, so I went home* ✓. “*Because I was late, so I went home*” × – two bridges, one river; the sentence falls in.

Sequence and contrast: telling events in order

- **Sequence** : *First, we had class. Then we had lunch. After that, we played football. Finally, I went home.*
- **when / while**: *I was cooking **when** the phone rang. **While** I was cooking, the phone rang.* The phone always knows when you are cooking.
- **although** = : *Although it rained, we played.* $\triangle$ Same one-bridge rule: *although* and *but* never share a sentence. *Suīrán...dànshì...* is Chinese beauty; English picks one.
- *if* for conditions : *If it rains, we will stay home.* (B1 gives *if* a whole topic; today it just waves hello.)

Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- $\triangle$ **The *yīnwèi...suǒyǐ* trap** is the most famous Chinglish pattern: “*Because... so...*” One bridge per river. Always.
- $\triangle$ **The *suīrán...dànshì* trap** is its twin: “*Although... but...*” ×. *Although it rained, we played* ✓.
- $\triangle$ **No preposition with today-family words.** “*on today*” × $\rightarrow$ *today*. The word already carries its own time.
- $\triangle$ **Connectors don't stack.** One bridge joins two ideas. For three ideas, build two sentences; English bridges take exactly two ends.

Say it aloud

Tell your whole day as one connected story.

- First, I woke up at seven – because my alarm rang, and because my cat sat on my face.
- I was sleepy, but I went to school. It was Monday, so nobody was happy.
- Although the homework was long, I finished it. Then I slept. Finally, peace.

Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. *The test is _____ Monday.* – **on**. A day is a floor: *on*.
2. *I was late, _____ I missed the bus.* – **so** or **because**, never both. One bridge.
3. *_____ it rained, we played football.* – **Although**. And no *but* allowed inside.
4. *I will see you _____ tomorrow.* – **no preposition**. *Tomorrow* brings its own time.
5. *The meeting is _____ noon.* – **at**. An exact point is a pin.