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## Quick Grammar Reference

### Portuguese Online

#### >>Prepositions > Useful Prepositions

**Prepositions** are little words that relate one [noun](#) to another. Basic prepositions in Portuguese are used very much as they are in English.

A basic preposition is a single-word preposition like *in, on, to, at, from, of, with* or *under*. As in English, these words all come **before** the noun in Portuguese. **Com** means *with*, and **com você** means *with you*. Portuguese prepositions also precede a special set of [prepositional pronouns](#) (in other words, there is a special word for **me** when you say *from me* as opposed to *he sees me* or *give me water*).

The following is a short list of basic prepositions in Portuguese and their English equivalents.

#### Prepositions

Portuguese	English
a	to, at
de	of, from
em	in, on
com	with
sem	without
sobre	above, about
sob	beneath, below
por	for, by
para	for, in order to

Also see how many of these [prepositions contract](#) with very basic words in Portuguese to form a single word.

English speakers often confuse the prepositions **por** and **para**. **Por** indicates a reciprocal *for*, often meaning *in exchange for*: **por vinte dólares** *for twenty dollars*. **Para** is a one-way action, directed toward someone or something: **para você** *for you* (with the meaning *this is intended for / destined to you*). **Para** has a definite aspect of direction that can be seen in the way Portuguese speakers often use it instead of **a to**: **para o restaurante** *to the restaurant*. Remember that thanks is a reciprocal action, so you must say **obrigado por...** *thank you for*.

**A** usually carries the meaning *to*. It means *at* in certain phrases, such as **às vezes** *at times* (where it is contracted with the [article as the](#)). In a phrase like *at a restaurant*, you must opt for **em in** and say **em um restaurante** *in a restaurant* (or the contracted **num restaurante**). **A um restaurante** can only mean *to a restaurant*.

**Sobre** can mean *about* in the sense of *dealing with* when saying, for example, *this story is about a happy dog*. It **never** translates to the about of *I have about five books* (with the meaning *approximately*).

The preposition **com with** is unique because it combines with many of the [prepositional pronouns](#) to form a single word. In other words, when saying *with me*, you cannot say **com mi**.

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## Quick Grammar Reference

### Portuguese Online

#### >>Prepositions > Prepositional Contractions

Many of the most basic prepositions combine with [articles](#) and other words to form a single contracted word. In another section, you can see that [com](#) *with* contracts with the set of [prepositional pronouns](#). The contractions in this section are even more common than those.

This table shows how the **prepositions** contract with [definite and indefinite articles](#).

Preposition	With <b>um/uma</b>	With <b>uns/umas</b>	With <b>o/a</b>	With <b>os/as</b>
<i>a to, at</i>	(a um), (a uma)	(a uns), (a umas)	ao, à	aos, às
<i>de of, from</i>	dum, duma	duns, dumas	do, da	dos, das
<i>em in, on</i>	num, numa	nuns, numas	no, na	nos, nas
<i>por for</i>	pelum, peluma	peluns, pelumas	pelo, pela	pelos, pelas
<i>para for</i>	prum, pruma	pruns, prumas	prò, prà	pròs, pràs

All of the bracketed forms are completely regular (they do not contract). The preposition **em** also allows the regular forms **em um**, **em uma**, **em uns**, and **em umas**. The non-contracted forms of **para** are heavily favored here: **para um**, **para uma**, **para uns**, **para umas**, **para o**, **para a**, **para os**, **para as**.

These prepositions can combine with a number of other basic words, such as **aqui** *here*, **áí** *right there*, **ali** *there*, and all forms of the [demonstrative adjectives and pronouns](#) (**isto** *this*, **isso** *that*, **aquilo** *that (over there)*), and the corresponding adjectives). This is particularly true of the words **a** and **de**. The contracted forms always leave off the final **e** of **de**: **daqui**, **dali**, **disto**, **disso**, **daquilo**, etc. The contractions with **a** are less common and always optional, but can occur when the following word begins in **a**-. These contractions are always written as **à**- (for example, **àquilo** *to that over there*).

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