

## Prepositions of time: at, in, on

### 1 Presentation

We often use 'at', 'in' and 'on' in time expressions. Study the table below.

| Preposition | Use and examples   |
|-------------|--|
| at          | <i>time of the day:</i><br>at 2 o'clock      at midday      at 4pm      at lunchtime<br><br><i>special expressions:</i><br>at night      at the weekend      at Christmas/Easter<br>at the same time      at the moment      at present  |
| on          | <i>days and dates:</i><br>on Monday      on 6 January      on Christmas Day      on my birthday<br><br><i>day + part of day:</i><br>on Monday morning      on Tuesday evening      on Thursday afternoon   |
| in          | <i>part of the day:</i><br>in the morning      in the afternoon<br><br><i>months:</i><br>in March      in January      in December<br><br><i>seasons:</i><br>in the summer      in winter      in spring<br><br><i>years:</i><br>in 2001      in 1969      in 500 BC<br><br><i>longer periods:</i><br>in the 1990s      in the 20th century      in the Ice Age      in the past |

When we say **last**, **next**, **every**, **this** we do not also use **at**, **in**, **on**:

- Did you go on holiday ~~in~~ **last** summer?
- My birthday is ~~on~~ **next** Friday.
- I visit my parents **at** **every** Christmas.
- I had a wonderful breakfast ~~in~~ **this** morning.

### 2 Practice 1

Complete each sentence with 'at', 'in' or 'on' plus one of the following:

|                |                |               |               |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1492           | 25 December    | ancient times | January       |
| Monday morning | New Year's Eve | night         | 2009          |
| Sundays        | the 1950s      | the moment    | the same time |

- The pop star Michael Jackson died in 2009.
- Christians celebrate Christmas \_\_\_\_\_.
- I don't like driving \_\_\_\_\_ because it's very dark.
- \_\_\_\_\_, people believed in many gods.
- Rock and roll music became popular \_\_\_\_\_.
- I'm really busy \_\_\_\_\_. Can you call me back later?
- Are you going to see the fireworks display \_\_\_\_\_?
- Jack arrived late for work \_\_\_\_\_.
- In Europe and the United States, most people do not work \_\_\_\_\_.
- I regularly go skiing \_\_\_\_\_ because it snows a lot.
- Columbus 'discovered' America \_\_\_\_\_.
- If everybody speaks \_\_\_\_\_, we'll never understand each other.

### 3 Practice 2

Complete the telephone conversation with 'at', 'in', 'on' where necessary. If no preposition is needed, leave a space ('-').

**Alice:** Hi Simon, it's Alice. Are you free \_\_\_ this evening?

**Simon:** No, I'm afraid I'm busy.

**Alice:** That's a pity. Are you doing anything \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> the weekend?

**Simon:** Well, \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> Saturday, I'm meeting old friend. We played football together \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> last year. But I'm free \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup> Sunday.

**Alice:** Great. How would you like to go to the cinema to see the new James Bond film?

**Simon:** Sounds good. What time are they showing the film?

**Alice:** The film starts \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup> 8 o'clock. But we should try to get there a little early. The cinema gets pretty busy \_\_\_\_\_<sup>7</sup> the evening.

**Simon:** What's the film like?

**Alice:** I've heard it's the best Bond film ever.

**Simon:** We'll see. I prefer the ones that came out \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup> the 1960s and 70s.

**Alice:** I'm sure you'll enjoy it! So shall we meet \_\_\_\_\_<sup>9</sup> around 7.30?

**Simon:** Sounds good. We should do this more often \_\_\_\_\_<sup>10</sup> the future.

**Alice:** Yes, we should. There will be a few more interesting films \_\_\_\_\_<sup>11</sup> next weekend too.

**Simon:** Great! So, see you \_\_\_\_\_<sup>12</sup> Sunday evening!