

1 Here's the Idea

▶ **A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition, its object, and any modifiers of the object.**

PREPOSITION ↓ ↓ MODIFIER ↓ OBJECT

Basketball was first played with real baskets.

A sentence can include more than one prepositional phrase.

James Naismith invented the game of basketball for a class at a YMCA in Springfield, Massachusetts.

The preposition in a prepositional phrase can have more than one object.



It was in Crawfordsville, Indiana, and nearby towns that basketball truly caught on.

For lessons on parts of a sentence, see pp. 24–37. For a list of common prepositions, see p. 19.

Adjective and Adverb Phrases

A prepositional phrase can function as either an adjective or an adverb. When a prepositional phrase modifies a noun or a pronoun, it acts as an adjective and is called an **adjective phrase**. An adjective phrase tells *what kind* or *which one*.

Was Michael Jordan the greatest player in history?


MODIFIES A NOUN

When a prepositional phrase modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb, it acts as an adverb and is called an **adverb phrase**. An adverb phrase tells *where*, *when*, *how*, or *to what extent*.

Early hoops were constructed of peach baskets.


MODIFIES A VERB

Sometimes a prepositional phrase modifies the object of another phrase.

The baskets were mounted on the tops of tall poles.


MODIFIES PHRASE

Placement of Prepositional Phrases

- ▶ **In general, prepositional phrases should be placed before or immediately after the words they modify.** A misplaced prepositional phrase can make a sentence awkward, unclear, or even unintentionally humorous.

AWKWARD

Wild applause broke out for the team from the stands.

REVISED

From the stands, wild applause broke out for the team.

AWKWARD

Our coach paid tribute to the gym teacher who invented the game of basketball at last night's awards dinner.

REVISED

At last night's awards dinner, our coach paid tribute to the gym teacher who invented the game of basketball.