PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE: AT / IN / ON

In
- in a room
- in a building
- in a box
- in a garden
- in a town/country
- in the city centre
- in a pool
- in the sea
- in a river

At
- at the bus stop
- at the door
- at the window
- at the roundabout
- at reception

On
- on the ceiling
- on the door
- on the table
- on her nose
- on the wall
- on the floor
- on a page
- on an island

We say that somebody / something is:
- in a line / in a row / in a queue
- in bed
- in the country / in the countryside
- in the sky / in the world
- in a photograph / in a picture / in an office
- in a book / in a (news)paper / in a magazine / in a letter

We use ‘ON’ in the following expressions:
- on the left / on the right
- on the left-hand side / on the right-hand side
- on the ground floor / on the first floor / on the second floor ...
- on a map / on a menu / on a list
- on a farm / on the beach / on the / my way

at the top (of the page)
at the bottom (of the page)
at the back
at the front
in the corner
at/on the corner
We say that somebody is in hospital / in prison / in jail:

Ann is in hospital because she needs surgery.

We say that somebody is at home / at work / at school / at university / at college:

Mary is not at home. She's at work.

I am studying engineering at university.

We use both ‘IN’ and ‘AT’ for buildings. We often use them without much difference in meaning, but we use ‘AT’ to say when an event takes place, for example a concert, a film, a party, a meeting.

We went to a concert at the Royal Festival Hall.

We are celebrating my birthday at the pub I told you about.

We say at the station / at the airport:

Don’t wait for me at the airport. I will take a taxi.

We say at somebody’s house:

I already had dinner at Mike’s.

We also say at the doctor’s, at the hairdresser’s, at the supermarket:

I bought my shampoo at the supermarket.

We use ‘IN’ when we are talking about the building itself. For example:

We had dinner at the hotel.

All the rooms in the hotel have air conditioning. ( not at the hotel)

We normally use ‘IN’ with cities, towns, villages…:

I am visiting my family in Madrid.

We usually say on a bus / on a train / on a plane / on a ship BUT in a car / in a taxi:

The bus was very full. There were too many people on it.

Michael arrived in his car.

We say on a bike / on a motorbike / on a horse:

Jane overtook me on her bike.

NOW GO TO THE NEXT PAGE AND COMPLETE THE PRACTICE EXERCISE
Complete the following sentences with AT , IN or ON

1. Where is the label?  ____________ the bottle.

2. Where is the fly?  ____________ the arm.

3. Where is the car?  ____________ the traffic lights.

4. Where is the notice?  ____________ the door.

5. Where are the selves?  ____________ the wall.


7. Where’s the man standing? ____________ the gate.

   Where’s the bird?  ____________ the gate.

8. Where are the children?  ____________ the beach.
1. Where does Sue work?  ____________ the sales department.

2. Where’s Sue’s flat?  ____________ the second floor.

3. Where’s the woman standing?  ____________ the corner.

4. Where’s the man standing?  ____________ the corner.

5. Where’s the cat?  ____________ the top of the stairs.

6. Where’s the dog?  ____________ the back of the car.


8. Where’s the Post Office?  ____________ the left.

9. Where is Gary sitting?  ____________ the back row.

10. Where does Kate work?  ____________ a farm.
1. You can hire a car ___________ the airport.
2. Dave is ___________ a train.
3. Karen is ___________ a conference.
4. Martin is ___________ hospital.
5. Judy is ___________ the hairdresser’s.
6. I saw Gary ___________ his bike.
7. We spent a few days ___________ New York.
8. We went to a show ___________ the Savoy Theatre.