

120 In, on and at (time)

1 Saying when

Look at these examples.

IN	ON	AT
<i>We bought the flat in 1994.</i>	<i>The race is on Saturday.</i>	<i>The film starts at seven thirty.</i>
In + year/month/season <i>in 1988</i> <i>in September</i> <i>in winter</i> <i>in the 21st century</i>	On + day/date <i>on Wednesday</i> <i>on 15 April</i> <i>on that day</i>	At + clock time/meal time <i>at three o'clock</i> <i>at lunch (-time)</i> <i>at that time</i> <i>at the moment</i>
In + a week or more <i>in the Easter holiday</i> <i>in the summer term</i>	On + a single day <i>on Easter Monday</i> <i>on Christmas Day</i>	At + two or three days <i>at Easter/Christmas</i> <i>at the weekend</i> <i>(US: on the weekend)</i>
In + part of day <i>in the morning</i> <i>in the evening</i>	On + day + part of day <i>on Friday morning</i> <i>on Tuesday evening</i>	
Look at these examples with night .		
<i>I woke up in the night.</i> (= in the middle of the night)	<i>It happened on Monday night.</i>	<i>I can't sleep at night.</i> (= when it is night)

But we do not use **in**, **on** or **at** before **every**, **last**, **next**, **this**, **tomorrow** and **yesterday**.

*We go to Greece **every summer**. My brother came home **last Christmas**.*

*I'll see you **next Friday**. I leave school **this year**.*

*The party is **tomorrow evening**. The group set off **yesterday morning**.*

2 In time or on time?

IN TIME

In time means 'early enough'.

*We'll have to hurry if we want to be **in time** for the show.*

*We got to the airport **in time** to have a coffee before checking in.*

*I was about to close the door when just **in time** I remembered my key. (= at the last moment)*

ON TIME

On time means 'at the right time', 'on schedule'.

*The plane took off **on time**.*

*I hope the meeting starts **on time**.*

*Rachel is never **on time**. She's always late.*

3 Other uses of in

We can use **in** for the time it takes to complete something.

*I did the crossword **in** five minutes. Could you walk thirty miles **in** a day?*

We can also use **in** for a future time measured from the present.

*Your photos will be ready **in** an hour. (= an hour from now)*

*The building will open **in** six weeks/**in** six weeks' time.*

▷ 88 **On Friday**, etc. without the

Practice

A Saying when (1)

Read the information about John F. Kennedy and then answer the questions.
Begin each answer with *in*, *on* or *at*.

John F. Kennedy was born into a famous American family. His date of birth was 29 May 1917. The year 1961 saw him become the 35th President of the US. Kennedy was killed as he drove in an open car through the streets of Dallas, Texas. Friday, 22 November 1963 was a sad day for America. It was 12.30 when a gunman opened fire and shot the President dead.

- ▶ When was John F. Kennedy born? On 29 May 1917.
- 1 When did he become President?
- 2 When was he killed?
- 3 What time was he shot?

B Saying when (1)

Mark is arranging a business meeting. Decide if you need *in*, *on* or *at*.
If you do not need a preposition, put a cross (X).

- Mark: I'm sorry I was out when you called (▶) X yesterday afternoon, Alice. Look, I'm free (▶) on the fifteenth of March. Can we meet then?
- Alice: I'm pretty busy (1) next week, I'm afraid. I can't see you (2) Friday.
- Mark: I'd like to have a meeting (3) this month if possible. I'll be very busy (4) April.
- Alice: I'm going away (5) Easter, so how about the week after? Shall we meet (6) the twenty-seventh? That's a Wednesday.
- Mark: I've got an appointment (7) the morning but nothing (8) the afternoon. Let's meet (9) Wednesday afternoon (10) half past two.

C In time or on time? (2)

Put in the right phrase: *in time* or *on time*.

- ▶ If the plane is late, we won't get to Paris in time for our connecting flight.
- 1 We were up very early, to see the sun rise.
- 2 How can the buses possibly run with all these traffic jams?
- 3 The post goes at five. I'm hoping to get this letter written
- 4 The coach will be here at 12.13 if it's

D In, on or at? (1-3)

Complete the conversations using *in*, *on* or *at*.

- ▶ Andrew: You only bought that book on Saturday. Have you finished it already?
- Jessica: I read it in about three hours yesterday evening.
- 1 Vicky: Will the bank be open half past nine?
- Daniel: Yes, it always opens absolutely time.
- 2 Sarah: We're leaving half past, and you haven't even changed.
- Mark: It's OK. I can easily shower and change ten minutes.
- 3 Laura: Your mother's birthday is Monday, isn't it?
- Trevor: Yes, I just hope this card gets there time.
- 4 Harriet: If we ever go camping again, it's going to be summer, not autumn.
- Mike: Never mind. We'll be home two days, and then we'll be dry again.