



Do you know how and when to use at, in and on to talk about time?

Look at these examples to see how we use at, in and on to talk about time :

At weekends, I love to go skiing.

In spring, the weather is warmer.

On Mondays, I work from home.

In the afternoon, I do activities.

On weekdays, I work until 12.

At 5 o'clock, I do two or three more hours of work.

Grammar explanation

We use the prepositions in, on or at to say when something happens.

At:

We usually use 'at' with clock times and meal times :

I get up at 6.30 a.m. and go for a run.

She doesn't like to leave the office at lunchtime.

We also use 'at' with some specific phrases such as 'at the weekend' and 'at night.'

At the weekend, I can spend the days how I like.

We can also say on weekends or on the weekend. This is more common in American English.

We say 'at' night when we mean all of the night. But we say 'in the night' when we want to talk about a specific time during the night.

She's a nurse and she works at night.

The baby often wakes up in the night.

We use 'at' with Christmas and other holidays that last several days.

The weather is very cold here at Christmas.

At Chinese New Year, many people go home to their families.

clock times	<i>at 6 o'clock</i> <i>at 9.30</i> <i>at 13.00</i>
mealtimes and breaks	<i>at breakfast time</i> <i>at lunchtime</i> <i>at dinner time</i> <i>at break time</i>
other time phrases	<i>at night</i> <i>at weekends/the weekend</i> <i>at Christmas/Easter</i>

In

We usually use in with parts of the day and longer periods of time such as months, seasons and years.

I usually relax in the evening.

In summer it's too hot to do anything.

I'm always really busy in December.

parts of the day	<i>in the morning/afternoon/evening</i>
months	<i>in January/February</i>
seasons	<i>in (the) spring/summer/autumn/winter</i>
years, centuries, decades	<i>in 2016</i> <i>in the 21st century</i> <i>in the 80s</i>
other time phrases	<i>in the past</i> <i>in the future</i> <i>in the last few years/months/weeks/days</i>

On

We usually use on with days and dates.

On Fridays, I have a long lunch.

It's his birthday on 19 October.

days	<i>on Monday/Tuesday etc.</i> <i>on my birthday</i> <i>on New Year's Day</i>
dates	<i>on 30 July</i> <i>on the second of August</i>