

# Nouns and Prepositions: Common Collocations

INTERMEDIATE

**Focus: Demand/need for, Reason for, Cause/Advantage/Picture of, Rise/Fall in, Damage to**

At the Intermediate (B1) level, it is important to know which preposition follows certain nouns. These combinations are called **collocations**. They do not always follow a logical rule, so they must be memorized.

## 1. Nouns + FOR

We use **for** with nouns that express purpose, motive, or necessity.

- **Reason for:** "Nobody knows the **reason for** the delay." (NOT: *reason of*)
- **Demand / Need for:** "There is a great **demand for** skilled workers." / "Is there a **need for** more chairs?"
- **Excuse for:** "There is no **excuse for** bad behavior."

## 2. Nouns + OF

We use **of** to show possession, origin, representation, or contents.

- **Cause of:** "The **cause of** the accident is still unclear."
  - *Note:* Compare **Reason for** vs. **Cause of**. We ask for the *reason for* an action, but the *cause of* an event or accident.
- **Advantage / Disadvantage of:** "One **advantage of** living here is the quiet."
- **Representations (Picture / Photo / Map of):** "He showed me a **photo of** his family." / "Do you have a **map of** the city?"

## 3. Nouns + IN (Trends and Change)

We use **in** with nouns indicating movement, statistics, or changing levels.

- **Increase / Decrease in:** "There has been an **increase in** tourism this year."
- **Rise / Fall in:** "We saw a sharp **fall in** temperatures last night." / "The **rise in** prices affects everyone."

## 4. Nouns + TO

We use **to** to show direction or the receiver of an action.

- **Damage to:** "The storm caused extensive **damage to** the roof." (NOT: *damage of*)

## Practice: Fill in the Blanks

**Instruction:** Complete the sentences using the correct preposition (**for, of, in, or to**).

1. The police are looking for the cause \_\_\_\_\_ the fire that started last night.
2. There has been a significant increase \_\_\_\_\_ the number of students studying online.
3. Can you show me a picture \_\_\_\_\_ your new puppy?
4. One major disadvantage \_\_\_\_\_ living in a big city is the heavy traffic.
5. I don't think there is any excuse \_\_\_\_\_ being late three times in a row.
6. The recent storm caused a lot of damage \_\_\_\_\_ the bridge.
7. Economists predict a sharp fall \_\_\_\_\_ unemployment rates next year.
8. What is the main reason \_\_\_\_\_ your decision to quit?
9. Is there a high demand \_\_\_\_\_ engineers in your country?
10. Please look at the map \_\_\_\_\_ the park to find the exit.
11. We need to find a solution, but first, we must understand the cause \_\_\_\_\_ the problem.
12. There is an urgent need \_\_\_\_\_ fresh water in the village.
13. The company reported a 10% rise \_\_\_\_\_ profits this quarter.
14. Taking regular breaks is one advantage \_\_\_\_\_ working from home.
15. Did they explain the reason \_\_\_\_\_ the cancellation of the train?

## **Answer Key**

1. of
2. in
3. of
4. of
5. for
6. to
7. in
8. for
9. for
10. of
11. of
12. for
13. in
14. of
15. for