

Difference Between Of and In

www.differencebetween.com

Key Difference – Of vs In

There are eight parts of speech in the English language: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, adjectives, conjunctions, and interjections. Prepositions are used to link a noun, pronoun or phrases in a sentence, adding clarity and more meaning to the sentence. Nouns are names of people, animals, places, things, ideas, concepts, etc. Pronouns replace nouns in order to avoid repetition. Verbs indicate actions while adverbs describe or modify verbs, adverbs or adjectives. Adjectives describe or add more information to nouns or pronouns. Conjunctions connect two words, phrases or clauses in a sentence. Interjections are exclamative words that express strong feelings or emotions. The two words *of* and *in* are parts of speech. Even though *of* and *in* are used often as prepositions in can be used as other parts of speech as well. ***Of* belongs to the category of prepositions whereas *in* belongs to categories of prepositions, adverbs, adjectives and also nouns.** This is the **key difference** between *of* and *in*. Moreover, even under the category of prepositions *of* and *in* have different meanings.

What Does *Of* Mean?

The proposition ‘of’ consists of several meanings. However, generally *of* is used to indicate belonging or origin of something. Its other usages include:

- When it is used to express a particular amount of something
- To express a position of something
- To express a particular characteristic or trait of someone or something, etc.

According to the definitions provided by Merriam Webster, *of* is used as a ‘function word to indicate belonging or a possessive relationship’, ‘a function word to indicate a characteristic or distinctive quality or possession’, ‘a function word to indicate the position in time of an action or occurrence’, ‘a function word to indicate origin or derivation’, ‘a function word to indicate the component material, parts, or elements or the contents’, ‘a function word to indicate the cause, motive, or reason’ etc.

The Cambridge dictionary also gives similar definitions to the preposition *of*. The usage of the preposition *of* under these contexts may vary.

Consider the given examples:

1. The students *of* class D became the winners in the annual Football Championship. (*of* indicates the students belonging to the class D)
2. The doctor told us that one-third *of* the whole population in the area suffered from recent influenza. (*of* is used to indicate the number of infected people)

3. She believed the handbag she bought was made *of* pure leather. (*of* is used to indicate the material of the handbag)
4. He proved himself to be a man **of** noble birth, noble not merely with his words but also with his actions. (*of* is used to indicate the origin or derivation)



Figure 01: The students *of* class D became the winners in the annual Football Championship.

Several phrases using *of* are given below:

- be *of* (give rise to..)
- *of* an evening / *of* morning (*of* most evenings/mornings or at some time in the evenings/mornings)
- *of* all (least likely or expected example)
- *of* all the nerve (an expression of indignation)

What Does *In* Mean?

The significance of *in* is it can belong to several grammar categories under parts of speech in the English language.

In is another often used preposition in the English language to indicate the location or position. Merriam Webster gives a number of definitions to the preposition category of *in* such as: ‘used as

a function word to indicate inclusion, location, or position within limits’, ‘used as a function word to indicate means, medium, or instrumentality’, ‘used as a function word to indicate the larger member of a ratio’, etc.

Consider the given examples:

1. The students who learn Geography are now *in* Class D./The new teacher is assigned to teach Geography to the students *in* Class D (here, *in* indicates the students who are inside the class D)
2. The legend says the sword of King Arthur is buried deep *in* this lake. (Here *in* indicates the location of the sword)
3. They drew these scribbles on the wall *in* crayon. (*in* indicates the medium used)
4. He told her that she is one in a million. (*in* signifies a ratio of an amount)



Figure 02: The new teacher is assigned to teach Geography to the students *in* Class D.

Apart from *in* being used as a preposition, the adverb, adjective and the noun usages of *in* should also be considered when learning about the difference between *of* and *in* with other words in English.

These examples use *in* as an adverb, an adjective and also as a noun.

1. He told me that the pool was deep, so better be careful not to fall **in** (Here, *in* is used as an adverb).
2. He told me that it is the **in** thing to do if you want to be a part of the company. (Here, *in things* suggests the latest thing, the fashion, the trend, etc. In this sentence *in* is used as an adjective and also a noun)
3. Finally, Ramona got an **in** with the new artist. (Here, *in* indicates a noun which means an influential position etc. with someone.)

Several phrases using in are given below:

- be in for (to expect something unpleasant)
- in and out of (to be a frequent visitor to someplace)
- in on (be secretive about something)
- in that (for the reason that...)
- in with (on friendly terms with someone)
- Ins and outs (all the details)

What are the Similarities Between *Of* and *In*?

- Both belong to prepositions in the English
- Both can be used to indicate a position of something.

What is the Difference Between *Of* and *In*?

| <i>Of</i> vs <i>In</i> | |
|---|--|
| <i>Of</i> is a preposition that is often used to give the meaning of possession or belonging to something or someone. | <i>In</i> is a preposition, adverb, adjective and also used as a noun to give varied meanings accordingly. |
| Parts of Speech | |
| <i>Of</i> only belongs to the category of prepositions under parts of speech. | <i>In</i> belongs to several categories such as prepositions, adverbs, and adjectives and nouns under parts of speech. |
| Usage | |
| <i>Of</i> is used as a preposition and with related phrases. | <i>In</i> is used as a noun, adverb, adjective, preposition and also with the related phrases. |

Summary – *Of vs In*

Acquiring a sound knowledge of the grammar of any language is essential for the accurate use of that language. Similarly, learning grammar rules and concepts in the English language assists in properly using the English language. The parts of speech in English is a category in the grammar that enriches the language. It consists of eight categories. The words *of* and *in* are categorized under prepositions. Nevertheless, *in* belong to other categories such as adverbs, adjectives and even nouns, in addition to being a preposition. This is the difference between *of* and *in*.

Reference:

1. “The Eight Parts of Speech Are Awesome.” English Parts of Speech, [Available here](#).
2. “Parts of Speech.” English Grammar – Woodward English, [Available here](#).

Image Courtesy:

1. “Newcastle United – Championship winners” By mikebrown59 – Championship Winners 2010Uploaded by kafuffle ([CC BY 2.0](#)) via [Commons Wikimedia](#)
2. “1 mundial perspectives” by Mundial Perspectives ([CC BY 2.0](#)) via [Flickr](#)

How to Cite this Article?

APA: Difference Between Of and In. (2018, January 18). Retrieved (date), from <http://differencebetween.com/difference-between-of-and-vs-in/>

MLA: "Difference Between Of and In" *Difference Between.Com*. 18 January 2018. Web.

Chicago: “Difference Between Of and In.” *Difference Between.Com*. <http://differencebetween.com/difference-between-of-and-vs-in/> accessed (accessed [date]).



Copyright © 2010-2017 Difference Between. All rights reserved.