



From Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*:

The rat only snorted and thrust his hands deep into his pockets.

Parts of Speech	adj.	n.	adv.	v.	conj.	v.	adj.	n.	adv.	prep.	adj.	n.
Parts of Sentence	subj.		---compound AVP---					D.O.				
Phrases	----prep. phrase----											
Clauses	-----one independent clause----- a simple declarative sentence											

Kenneth Grahame uses the prepositional phrase *into his pockets* in this descriptive sentence about the rat. The preposition is *into*, and the object of the preposition is *pockets*. Because prepositional phrases are like big adjectives or adverbs, what word do you think the prepositional phrase modifies?

A preposition shows the relationship between its object and another word in the sentence, and in this case the preposition *into* shows the relationship between its object *pockets* and the word *deep*. The prepositional phrase acts as an adverb to modify *deep*.

There should be no comma after the coordinating conjunction *and*; *snorted and thrust* is a compound verb, and we want it to be a compound, rather than being split by a comma.

The word *his* is an adjective in this sentence because it modifies a noun.

The third person singular active voice intransitive action verb *snorted* is an example of onomatopoeia, a word that sounds like what it represents; in other words, the verb *snorted* sounds snorty.

Notice the strong stress on *deep*, which is even more emphatic because it follows the noun *hands*, which is also stressed.

into



Punctuating introductory prepositional phrases: When a prepositional phrase is at the beginning of a sentence, such as *From the beginning Caesar demonstrated acumen*, we put a comma after the phrase if it is a long phrase, usually five words or more, and we put a comma after multiple phrases, but we do not put a comma after a short two- or three-word prepositional phrase unless we need to for clarity.

Right: *From the back of the auditorium*, we could not see the orchestra.

Right: *During the author's publicized speech*, the microphone stopped working.

Right: *In a minute* I would like to start the lecture.

Wrong: *In 1775*, the people rebelled.

Never end a sentence with a preposition? We avoid such sentences as “Where are you at?” because the meaning of the preposition is incomplete. We want the speaker to finish the idea: *Where are you, at the park?* *Where are you, at the restaurant?* Or we want the speaker to omit the superfluous preposition: *Where are you?* In other cases, however, a concluding preposition does not jar the ear as once it did. “Who is this letter for?” is a sentence that would probably not injure the reputation of an educated speaker.

E.B. White's witty comment. One of the most famous stories having to do with ending sentences with prepositions comes from E.B. White, who was writing a letter to the editor of *The Elements of Style*, a book that he and William Strunk, Jr., wrote. White humorously offered this sentence to illustrate the proper way to end a sentence with—if you can believe it—five prepositions:

*A father of a little boy goes upstairs after supper to read to his son, but he brings the wrong book. The boy says, “Why did you bring that book that I don't want to be read **to out of up for?**”*

