

## Unit 75

## Hospital/the hospital, school/the school etc.

**a** Study this example situation with hospital:



Jack had an accident a few days ago.

He had to go **to hospital**.  
He is still **in hospital** now.  
Jill went **to the hospital** to visit him.  
She is **at the hospital** now.

Someone goes **to hospital** or is **in hospital** if he is ill or injured. We are not necessarily thinking of particular hospital; we are thinking of the idea of hospital.

But Jill is not ill or injured. She is not 'in hospital'. She went there as a visitor. We say 'Jill went **to the hospital** / Jill is **at the hospital**' because we mean a particular hospital, the one where Jack is.

**b** Prison school university college church

We say a criminal goes **to prison** (*not* 'to the prison'); a child goes **to school**; a student goes **to university/college**. We do not use **the** when we are thinking of the idea of these places and what they are used for:

- After I leave **school**, I want to go to **university**. (as a pupil/student)
- Why aren't the children at **school** today? (as pupils)
- Mrs Kelly goes to **church** every Sunday. (for a religious service)
- Ken's brother is **in prison** for robbery. (he is a prisoner)

We say 'be **in prison**', but usually 'be **at school/university/college**'. 'In church' and 'at church' are both possible.

Now study these sentences with **the**:

- Mr Kelly went to **the school** to meet his daughter's teacher. (He didn't go there as a pupil.)
- Excuse me, where is **the university**, please? (a particular building)
- The workmen went to **the church** to repair the roof. (They didn't go to a religious service.)
- Ken went to **the prison** to visit his brother. (He went as a visitor, not as a prisoner; he went to the prison where his brother was.)

**c** bed work home

We say: 'go **to bed** / be **in bed**' etc. (*not* 'the bed'):

- It's time go **to bed** now.
- Is Tom still **in bed**?

'Go **to work** / be **at work** / start **work** / finish **work**' etc. (*not* 'the work'):

- Why isn't Ann **at work** today?
- What time do you finish **work**?

'Go **home** / come **home** / be **at home** / stay **at home**' etc. (*not* 'the home'):

- Come on! Let's go **home**.
- Will you be **at home** tomorrow?

There is *no* preposition with **go/come/get/arrive home**. (*not* 'to home')

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'Go **to work** / be **at work** / start **work** / finish **work**' etc. (*not* 'the work'):

- Why isn't Ann **at work** today?
- What time do you finish **work**?

'Go **home** / come **home** / be **at home** / stay **at home**' etc. (*not* 'the home'):

- Come on! Let's go **home**.
- Will you be **at home** tomorrow?

There is *no* preposition with **go/come/get/arrive home**. (*not* 'to home')