

# English Ladder

## Student Workbook

### Grammar Concepts: Using By and Through

A polished self-study handout designed for print or tablet use. Read the concept, notice the pattern, and then complete the matching practice set on your own.



Grammar Concept	Key Point	Additional Examples	Summary	Bonus: Instrumental Prepositions: Using "With," "Using," "By Mea
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#### Visual anchor

Use the concept poster to spotlight the main language pattern in **Grammar Concepts: Using By and Through** and keep the explanation visible during practice and discussion.

**ENGLISH LADDER**

Concept #05 ▶ **By & Through**

- We generally use **by** before an **-ing** verb.
- We generally use **through** before a noun phrase.

- I lost much weight **by** dieting.
- I lost much weight **through** a diet.
- I found a wife **by** being very persistent.
- I found a wife **through** much persistence.
- I passed the exam **by** studying hard.
- I passed the exam **through** hard study.
- I tricked the bear **by** acting dead.
- I tricked the bear **through** my acting.
- I defeated the ninja **by** throwing eggs.
- I defeated the ninja **through** an egg attack.

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## Core Idea

Understanding the correct use of by and through can significantly enhance your English fluency. These prepositions often confuse learners due to their subtle differences in meaning and usage. Here's a comprehensive guide to help you master these concepts.

### Quick reference

General Rules	By is generally used before an -ing verb.
Detailed Explanation and Examples	Method: Indicates the way something is achieved.
Detailed Explanation and Examples	I lost much weight by dieting. Explanation: The method of losing weight was through dieting. Similar Sentence: She improved her health by exercising regularly.
Detailed Explanation and Examples	Medium: Indicates the medium or process used.
Detailed Explanation and Examples	I lost much weight through a diet. Explanation: The medium of losing weight was a diet. Similar Sentence: She gained knowledge through experience.

## Key Points

### General Rules

- By is generally used before an -ing verb.
- Through is generally used before a noun phrase.

### Detailed Explanation and Examples

#### By + -ing Verb

The preposition by is used to indicate the method or means of doing something, typically followed by a verb ending in -ing.

- Method: Indicates the way something is achieved.
- Means: Describes the method or process.

Examples:



- I lost much weight by dieting. Explanation: The method of losing weight was through dieting. Similar Sentence: She improved her health by exercising regularly.
- I found a wife by being very persistent. Explanation: The means of finding a wife was through persistence. Similar Sentence: He succeeded by working hard every day.
- I passed the exam by studying hard. Explanation: The method of passing the exam was through hard study. Similar Sentence: They learned English by practicing daily.
- I tricked the bear by acting dead. Explanation: The way the bear was tricked was by pretending to be dead. Similar Sentence: The magician amazed the audience by performing incredible tricks.
- I defeated the ninja by throwing eggs. Explanation: The means of defeating the ninja was through throwing eggs. Similar Sentence: She caught the thief by setting a trap.

### Through + Noun Phrase

The preposition through is used to indicate the medium or process by which something is achieved, typically followed by a noun or noun phrase.

- Medium: Indicates the medium or process used.
- Process: Describes the process or method.

### Examples:

- I lost much weight through a diet. Explanation: The medium of losing weight was a diet. Similar Sentence: She gained knowledge through experience.
- I found a wife through much persistence. Explanation: The process of finding a wife was through persistence. Similar Sentence: He achieved success through determination.
- I passed the exam through hard study. Explanation: The process of passing the exam was through hard study. Similar Sentence: They overcame the challenge through teamwork.
- I tricked the bear through my acting. Explanation: The medium of tricking the bear was through acting. Similar Sentence: The problem was solved through careful planning.
- I defeated the ninja through an egg attack. Explanation: The process of defeating the ninja was through an egg attack. Similar Sentence: She won the game through skill and strategy.

## Additional Examples and Practice

### By:

- She got in shape by swimming every morning.
- He made a living by selling homemade crafts.
- They solved the puzzle by thinking outside the box.
- The artist became famous by creating unique sculptures.



- She won the competition by practicing tirelessly.

Through:

- She learned French through immersive classes.
- He got the job through a strong recommendation.
- They succeeded through persistent effort.
- The project was completed through collaborative work.
- She found peace through meditation.

## Summary

Understanding the distinction between by and through is crucial for clear and accurate communication in English. By is used before -ing verbs to show the method or means, while through is used before noun phrases to indicate the medium or process. Practice these structures with various examples to reinforce your understanding.

## Bonus: Instrumental Prepositions: Using "With," "Using," "By Means Of," and "Via"

In English, besides by and through, other prepositions are also useful to express instrumentation (the use of something to accomplish a goal). Prepositions like with, using, by means of, and via help convey the tools, methods, and processes by which actions are performed. With is commonly used to specify the tool or manner, such as "He wrote the letter with a pen." Using highlights the specific method or instrument employed, as in "She solved the equation using a calculator." By means of offers a more formal expression, for instance, "The problem was solved by means of advanced algorithms." Via indicates the route or method, such as "She sent the package via courier." These prepositions enrich our ability to describe actions clearly and accurately.

Let's explore these these other terms.

### With

With is commonly used to indicate the tool, instrument, or manner by which something is done.

- Tool/Instrument: Indicates the physical object used to perform an action.
- Manner: Describes the way in which something is done.

Examples:

- He wrote the letter with a pen. (Instrument)
- Explanation: The tool used to write the letter is a pen.



- Similar Sentence: She painted the picture with a brush.
- She opened the can with a knife. (Tool)
- Explanation: The tool used to open the can is a knife.
- Similar Sentence: He fixed the door with a screwdriver.
- He greeted me with a smile. (Manner)
- Explanation: The way he greeted me was by smiling.
- Similar Sentence: She accepted the award with enthusiasm.
- She stirred the soup with a spoon. (Tool)
- Explanation: The tool used to stir the soup is a spoon.
- Similar Sentence: They mixed the ingredients with a whisk.

## Using

Using is often employed to specify the tool or method by which an action is performed.

- Tool/Method: Indicates the specific tool or method used to achieve something.

Examples:

- He fixed the car using a wrench. (Tool)
- Explanation: The tool used to fix the car is a wrench.
- Similar Sentence: She cut the paper using scissors.
- She solved the equation using a calculator. (Tool)
- Explanation: The tool used to solve the equation is a calculator.
- Similar Sentence: They built the model using glue and cardboard.
- They navigated the route using a map. (Method)
- Explanation: The method used to navigate the route is a map.
- Similar Sentence: He prepared the report using the latest data.
- She cooked the meal using fresh ingredients. (Method)
- Explanation: The method used to cook the meal involves fresh ingredients.
- Similar Sentence: He designed the website using modern tools.

## By Means Of

By means of is a more formal way to indicate the method or tool used to achieve something.

- Method/Tool: Specifies the way or tool used to accomplish an action.

Examples:



- He communicated by means of gestures. (Method)
- Explanation: The method used to communicate is through gestures.
- Similar Sentence: She conveyed her message by means of sign language.
- She learned the language by means of immersion. (Method)
- Explanation: The method used to learn the language is immersion.
- Similar Sentence: They explored the cave by means of advanced equipment.
- The problem was solved by means of advanced algorithms. (Tool)
- Explanation: The tool used to solve the problem is advanced algorithms.
- Similar Sentence: The data was analyzed by means of specialized software.
- The experiment was conducted by means of precise instruments. (Tool)
- Explanation: The tools used for the experiment are precise instruments.
- Similar Sentence: The structure was built by means of innovative techniques.

### Via

Via is used to indicate the route or method used to achieve something.

- Route/Method: Describes the path or means used.

Examples:

- She sent the package via courier. (Route)
- Explanation: The route used to send the package is a courier service.
- Similar Sentence: He traveled to Paris via London.
- He accessed the database via the company's network. (Method)
- Explanation: The method used to access the database is the company's network.
- Similar Sentence: They received the information via email.
- She communicated with her team via video conference. (Method)
- Explanation: The method used to communicate is video conference.
- Similar Sentence: He shared the documents via a secure link.
- The funds were transferred via electronic banking. (Method)
- Explanation: The method used to transfer the funds is electronic banking.
- Similar Sentence: The results were published via an online platform.

## Summary



Understanding the use of with, using, by means of, and via can greatly enhance your ability to describe actions and methods clearly and accurately:

- With specifies tools or manner.
- Using highlights the tool or method employed.
- By means of provides a formal way to describe the method or tool used.
- Via indicates the route or method used.

By practicing sentences with these prepositions, you can improve your ability to convey precise meanings in English.



## Practice Check

Answer the quiz items below with either "by" or "through" consistent with the grammar concepts taught on the left.

### ITEM 01

How did she improve her health? She improved her health \_\_\_\_\_ exercising regularly.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 02

How did he succeed in his business? He succeeded \_\_\_\_\_ working hard every day.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 03

What was the method used to pass the exam? I passed the exam \_\_\_\_\_ studying hard.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 04

How did the magician amaze the audience? The magician amazed the audience \_\_\_\_\_ performing incredible tricks.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 05

How did she catch the thief? She caught the thief \_\_\_\_\_ setting a trap.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 06**

How did she gain knowledge? She gained knowledge \_\_\_\_\_ experience.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 07**

What process led to his success? He achieved success \_\_\_\_\_ determination.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 08**

How did they overcome the challenge? They overcame the challenge \_\_\_\_\_ teamwork.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 09**

How was the problem solved? The problem was solved \_\_\_\_\_ careful planning.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 10**

How did she win the game? She won the game \_\_\_\_\_ skill and strategy.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 11**

How did she get in shape? She got in shape \_\_\_\_\_ swimming every morning.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 12**

How did he make a living? He made a living \_\_\_\_\_ selling homemade crafts.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 13**

How did they solve the puzzle? They solved the puzzle \_\_\_\_\_ thinking outside the box.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 14**

How did the artist become famous? The artist became famous \_\_\_\_\_ creating unique sculptures.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 15**

How did she win the competition? She won the competition \_\_\_\_\_ practicing tirelessly.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 16**

How did she learn French? She learned French \_\_\_\_\_ immersive classes.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 17**

How did he get the job? He got the job \_\_\_\_\_ a strong recommendation.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 18**

How did they succeed? They succeeded \_\_\_\_\_ persistent effort.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 19**

How was the project completed? The project was completed \_\_\_\_\_ collaborative work.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 20**

How did she find peace? She found peace \_\_\_\_\_ meditation.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 21**

How did he trick the bear? He tricked the bear \_\_\_\_\_ acting dead.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 22**

How did they lose weight? They lost weight \_\_\_\_\_ a balanced diet.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 23**

How did she defeat the ninja? She defeated the ninja \_\_\_\_\_ throwing eggs.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 24**

How did he trick the bear? He tricked the bear \_\_\_\_\_ his acting.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



## Self-check Answer Key

Use the key after you have completed every item on your own.

**ITEM 01**

How did she improve her health? She improved her health by exercising regularly.

**ITEM 02**

How did he succeed in his business? He succeeded by working hard every day.

**ITEM 03**

What was the method used to pass the exam? I passed the exam by studying hard.

**ITEM 04**

How did the magician amaze the audience? The magician amazed the audience by performing incredible tricks.

**ITEM 05**

How did she catch the thief? She caught the thief by setting a trap.

**ITEM 06**

How did she gain knowledge? She gained knowledge through experience.

**ITEM 07**

What process led to his success? He achieved success through determination.

**ITEM 08**

How did they overcome the challenge? They overcame the challenge through teamwork.

**ITEM 09**

How was the problem solved? The problem was solved through careful planning.

**ITEM 10**

How did she win the game? She won the game through skill and strategy.

**ITEM 11**

How did she get in shape? She got in shape by swimming every morning.

**ITEM 12**

How did he make a living? He made a living by selling homemade crafts.

**ITEM 13**

How did they solve the puzzle? They solved the puzzle by thinking outside the box.

**ITEM 14**

How did the artist become famous? The artist became famous by creating unique sculptures.

**ITEM 15**

How did she win the competition? She won the competition by practicing tirelessly.

**ITEM 16**

How did she learn French? She learned French through immersive classes.

**ITEM 17**

How did he get the job? He got the job through a strong recommendation.

**ITEM 18**

How did they succeed? They succeeded through persistent effort.

**ITEM 19**

How was the project completed? The project was completed through collaborative work.

**ITEM 20**

How did she find peace? She found peace through meditation.

**ITEM 21**

How did he trick the bear? He tricked the bear by acting dead.

**ITEM 22**

How did they lose weight? They lost weight through a balanced diet.

**ITEM 23**

How did she defeat the ninja? She defeated the ninja by throwing eggs.

**ITEM 24**

How did he trick the bear? He tricked the bear through his acting.