

The preposition **de** has many meanings. Because of the diversity of meanings, there can sometimes be doubt as to the correct interpretation of an expression. In those cases, various clarifying elements may be added, or another preposition may be chosen.

Movement away from something

☞ The basic meaning of the preposition **de** is a place where movement begins:

Mi venas de la avo, kaj mi iras nun al la onklo. - I'm coming from my grandfather and I'm now going to my uncle.

La vento forblavis **de mia kapo** la ĉapon. - The wind blew my hat off my head.

Ilia vojaĝo **de Delhio** al Kalkato estis tre longedaŭra. - Their trip from Delhi to Calcutta was very long.

Rekta linio estas la plej mallonga vojo **de unu punkto** al alia. - A straight line is the shortest route from one point to another.

For **de tie ĉi!** - Away from here!

☞ In case more clarity is needed you can say for **de** or **disde**: La polico prenis la ŝtelitan monon **for de la rabisto** / **disde la rabisto**. If you were to say: ...**la ŝtelitan monon de la rabisto**, one might perhaps think that we are using the **possessive de**: "...la ŝtelitan monon, kiu apartenis al la rabisto."

Origin, cause

☞ **De** can also show origin or cause:

De la patro mi ricevis libron, kaj **de la frato** mi ricevis plumon. - From my father I got a book, and from my brother I got a pen.

La hebreoj estas Izraelidoj, ĉar ili devenas **de Izraelo**. - The Hebrews are Israelites because they originate from Israel.

Francisko **de Asizo** = this Francis who comes from Assisi = **Francisko el Asizo** - Francis of Assisi

Li paliĝis **de timo** kaj poste li ruĝiĝis **de honto**. = ...pro timo... pro honto. - He paled from fear and later blushed for shame. = ...pro timo... pro honto.

For the cause, however, we normally use **pro** and sometimes **el**.

Ebria **de feliĉo**, mi al kroĉiĝis al lia kolo. - Drunken with happiness I hung on his neck.

Contrast, difference

☞ **De** often shows difference, contrast, distinguishing one thing from another, belonging, distance, or disconnection:

Mi povus diferencigi la saĝajn **de la malsaĝaj!** - I can tell the wise from the foolish.

Kial Vi kaŝas vin **de mi?** - Why do you hide (yourself) from me?

Nun mi iom liberiĝis **de la plej urĝaj el miaj kolektiĝintaj laboroj**. - Now I have freed myself somewhat from some of the most pressing jobs that have been piling up.

Ĝi estas libera **de malsanoj**. - It is free of disease.

Ili loĝas malproksime **de ni**. - They live far from us.

Time

☞ **De** can also show the beginning moment of a continuous action or state:

Li laboras **de la sesa horo** matene. - He works from six o'clock in the morning.

De nun mi ne plu manĝos viandon. - From now on I will no longer eat meat.

Mi konas lin **de longa tempo**. - I have known him for a long time (and still know him). Note that Esperanto uses the present tense here because the action continues into the present.

☞ The expressions **ekde** and **de post** can be used to show clearly that a sentence is referring to time.

☞ **ekde** = from the beginning of

de p... = from the end of

☞ When talking about a point in time there is hardly any difference between **ekde** and **de post**, but when talking about duration of time, then the difference is greater: **de post ŝia vivo = ekde ŝia morto**.

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Possession

Very often **de** expresses belonging (= possession, acquisition, proximity, connection, involvement, kinship...):

Jen kuŝas la ĉapelo de la patro. - There lies the father's hat.

The hat belongs to the father as a possession or property.

La dentoj de leono estas akraj. - The teeth of a lion are sharp.

The teeth belong to the lion as a body part.

Sur la bordo de la maro staris amaso da homoj. - On the edge of the sea stood a crowd of people.

The edge belongs to the sea, because it is found right next to it.

Januaro estas la unua monato de la jaro. - January is the first month of the year.

Months are parts of the year.

La filo de la reĝo ŝin renkontis. - The son of the king met her.

The son belongs to the king as a relative.

Mi legos poemon de Zamenhof. - I will read a poem by Zamenhof.

The poem belongs to Zamenhof because he wrote it.

Glaso de vino estas glaso, en kiu antaŭe sin trovis vino, aŭ kiun oni uzas por vino. - A wine glass is a glass which previously held wine, or which is used for wine.

The glass belongs to the wine because it is destined to be used for wine.

Ŝi estas profesoro de matematiko. - She is a professor of mathematics.

The professor belongs to mathematics because that is her specialization. One can also use **pri**.

Tiu libro estas de Karlo. - That book is Karlo's.

More often we use **aparteni + al**: **Tiu libro apartenas al Karlo.**

Ĝi estas de mi. - It is mine.

More commonly we say: **Ĝi estas mia. Ĝi apartenas al mi.**

Subject

A **de** expression that acts as a supplement to an action noun normally shows the subject (the one performing the action) or the object of the action described by the noun.

La kanto de la birdoj estas agrabla. - The singing of the birds is pleasant.

The birds are singing.

Li tuj faris, kion mi volis, kaj mi dankis lin por la tuja plenumo de mia deziro. - He straightaway did what I wanted and I thanked him for the immediate fulfilment of my desire.

He fulfilled my desire.

To check whether it is the **logical subject** we can use **fare de (by)**: **Hodiaŭ posttagmeze okazos akcepto fare de la urbestro.** (This afternoon there will be a reception by the mayor.) The mayor will receive someone.

Note: Some people abbreviate **fare de** to **far**, but that word is unofficial and not recommended for use.

Regarding the passive participle, **de** most frequently shows the subject of the action described, the person or thing performing an action.

Ŝi estas amata de ĉiuj. - She is loved by all.

(they)All love her.

Li estis murdita de nekonato. - He was murdered by an unknown (assailant).

An unknown person murdered him.

La montoj estis kovritaj de neĝo. - The mountains were covered with snow.

Snow covered the mountains.

You can also use **fare de**: **La infano estis forprenita fare de la patrino.** But simply using **de** usually suffices with passive participles. If another meaning is required of a **de**-expression with a passive participle, then it is often necessary to clearly indicate this by using **disde**, **for de**, **ekde** or something similar: **La infano estis forprenita disde la patrino.** It was taken away from its mother.

Quality

Quality

De sometimes shows a quality, a composition, or a measure:

Ŝi estas virino **de meza aĝo**. = Ŝi estas mezaĝa virino. - She is a woman of middle age. = She is a middle aged woman.

Li havas harojn **de nedifinita koloro**. - He has hair of an indefinite color.

Li estas **de meza kresko**. - He is of average height.

bukedo de rozoj = a bouquet which consists of roses

reto de komputiloj = a net(work) which consists of computers

La knabo havis aĝon **de nur ses jaroj**. - The boy was only six years of age. (lit. The boy had an age of only six years.)

English -

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