

The prepositions above and about

The word about can be used as an adverb or a preposition. When about is used as a preposition, it will be followed by a noun.

About can mean in various directions or places.

Clothes were lying about the room.

The children were running about the garden.

About can also mean 'near' or 'near by'.

Is anybody about?

The expression 'How about?' is used to ask someone what their opinion is. Note that after 'how about' we use a noun or an -ing form.

How about getting something to eat?

He is a rich guy but how about his character?

About can mean 'roughly'.

It is about 3 o'clock.

There were about 50 students in the class.

Above

The word above can be used as a preposition or an adverb. 'Above' means 'higher than', 'greater than' or 'more than'.

She is above average in intelligence.

The water rose above my knees.

If you think you are above something, you are too proud to do it.

He thinks he is above mingling with us. (= He is too proud to mingle with us.)

Nobody is above law.

If something is above you, it is too difficult for you.

Einstein's theories have always been above me. (= I have always had difficulty understanding Einstein's theories.)

Above-board

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If a business deal is above board, it is thoroughly honest.