

Topic 5: Parts of Speech - ADVERBS

EN110

WHAT IS ADVERB?

An adverb is a word that is used to change, modify or qualify several types of words including an adjective, a verb, a clause, another adverb, or any other type of word or phrase, with the exception of determiners and adjectives, that directly modify nouns.

A good way to understand adverbs is to think about them as the words that provide context. Specifically, adverbs provide a description of how, where, when, in what manner and to what extent something is done or happens.

Normally, we can spot an adverb by the fact that it often ends in *ly*, but there are lots of adverbs that don't end in this way. Moreover, adverbs can be used in many combinations with each other.

- ✦ Traditionally considered a single part of speech, adverbs perform a
- ✦ wide variety of functions, making it difficult to treat them as a single, unified category.

However, spotting an adverb, especially one that ends in -ly is easy. Adverbs normally help paint a fuller picture by describing how something happens, such as

When? She *always* arrives early.

How? He drives *carefully*.

Where? They go *everywhere* together.

In what way? She eats *slowly*.


To what extent? It is *terribly* hot.

✦ There are many rules for using adverbs, and these rules often depend upon
✦ which type of adverb you are using. Remember these basics and using
adverbs to make sentences more meaningful will be easier for you.

1. Adverbs can always be used to modify verbs. Notice that the second of these two sentences is much more interesting simply because it contains an adverb:

EX 1: The dog ran. (You can picture a dog running, but you don't really know much more about the scene.)

EX 2: The dog ran *excitedly*. (You can picture a dog running, wagging its tail, panting happily, and looking glad to see its owner. You can paint a much more interesting picture in your head when you know how or why the dog is running.)

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- ✦ 2. Adverbs are often formed by adding the letters “-ly” to adjectives. This ✦
✦ makes it very easy to identify adverbs in sentences. There are many exceptions to this rule;

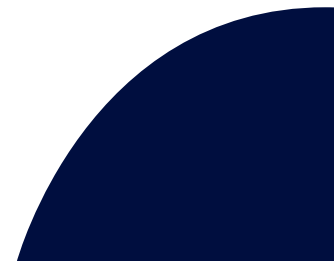

everywhere, nowhere, and upstairs are a few examples.

3. An adverb can be used to modify an adjective and intensify the meaning it conveys. For example:

My math teacher is **incredibly** *patient*.

This movie is **more** interesting than the first one.

As you read the following adverb examples, you’ll notice how these useful words modify other words and phrases by providing information about the place, time, manner, certainty, frequency, or other circumstances of activity denoted by the verbs or verb phrases in the sentences.





Types of Adverbs

1. Adverbs of Manner

An *adverb of manner* will explain how an action is carried out. Very often adverbs of manner are adjectives with -ly added to the end, but this is certainly not always the case. In fact, some adverbs of manner will have the same spelling as the adjective form.



Some examples of adverbs of manner include:

Slowly, Rapidly, Clumsily, Badly, Diligently, Sweetly, Warmly and
Sadly

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1. She passed the exam easily.
 2. They walk quickly to catch the train.
 3. The dinner party went badly.
 4. John answered the question correctly.

Notice how the adverbs are formed by adding -ly to the adjectives *bad*, *correct* and *quick*, although there is a slight spelling change when forming an adverb with the adjective *easy*.

As mentioned, some adverbs of manner take the same spelling as the adjective and never add an -ly to the end:

1. The boys had worked hard.
 2. Julia dances well.
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2. Adverbs of place

An adverb of place, sometimes called spatial adverbs, will help explain where an action happens. Adverbs of place will be associated with the action of the verb in a sentence, providing context for direction, distance and position: southeast, everywhere, up, left, close by, back, inside, around. These terms don't usually end in -ly.

a. Directions

1. New York is located north of Philadelphia.
2. They traveled down the mountainside.
3. First, I looked here, and then I looked there, but I can't find them anywhere.

Notice that here and there are often used at the beginning of a sentence to express emphasis or in exclamation.

Here comes the sun.

There is love in the air.

Here you are!

b. Distance

1. Jane is moving far away.
2. Carly is sitting close to me.

c. Position

1. The treasure lies underneath the box.
2. The cat is sleeping on the bed.
3. Why are you standing in the middle of the dancefloor?

In addition, some adverbs of position will refer to a direction of movement. These often end in -ward or -wards.

1. Oscar travelled onward to Los Angeles.
2. Hannah looked upwards to the heavens.
3. Molly, move forward to the front of the queue, please.

3. Adverbs of Frequency

Adverbs of frequency are used to express time or how often something occurs. Adverbs of frequency can be split into two main groups. The first, adverbs of indefinite frequency, are terms that have an unclear meaning as to how long or how often something occurs: usually, always, normally.

These adverbs will usually be placed after the main verb or between the auxiliary verb and infinitive.

1. The adverb is usually placed before the main verb.
2. I can normally make the shot.
3. I will always love

Adverbs of definite frequency will usually be placed at the end of the sentence.

1. We get paid hourly.
2. The situation seems to change monthly.
3. The newspaper is bought daily.

4. Adverbs of Time

✦ Adverbs of time, while seemingly similar to adverbs of frequency, tell us when something happens. Adverbs of time are usually placed at the end of a sentence.

1. Harvey forgot his lunch yesterday and again today.
2. I have to go now.
3. We first met Julie last year.

While it's almost always correct to have the adverb of time at the end of the sentence, you can place it at the start of the sentence to put a different emphasis on the time if it is important to the context

1. Last year was the worst year of my life.
2. Tomorrow our fate will be sealed.
3. Yesterday my troubles seemed so far away.

5. Adverbs of Purpose

Adverbs of purpose, sometimes called adverbs of reason, help to describe why something happened. They can come in the form of individual words – so, since, thus, because – but also clauses – so that, in order to. Notice in the examples that the adverbs of purpose are used to connect sentences that wouldn't make sense if they were formed alone.

1. I was sick, thus didn't go to work today.
2. I started jogging so that I wouldn't be late.
3. Because I was late, I jogged a little faster.
4. Since it's your birthday, I will buy you a gift.

Positions of Adverbs

The positions of adverbs are not a fixed or set thing. As you have seen, adverbs can appear in different positions in a sentence. However, there are some rules that help us decide where an adverb should be positioned. The rules will be different depending on whether the adverb is acting to modify an adjective or another adverb, a verb or what type of adverb it is.

- A. **Adverb position with adjectives and other adverbs** - These adverbs will usually be placed before the adjective or adverb being modified:



Examples:

1. We gave them a **really** tough match. (The adverb really modifies the adjective tough.)
2. It was **quite** windy that night. (The adverb quite modifies the adjective windy.)
3. We don't go to the movies **terribly often**. (The adverb terribly modifies the adverb often.)

- + **B. Adverb position with verbs** - This can be a bit trickier because, it will
- + depend on the type of adverb – place, position, time etc. – and there are many exceptions to the rules. However, a basic set of guidelines is shown below:

Adverbs of manner or place are usually positioned at the end of the sentence:


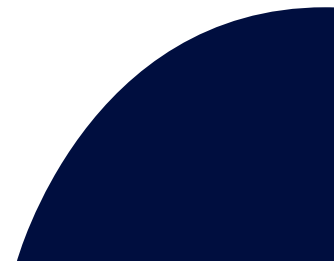
1. She laughed **timidly**.
2. I stroked the cat **gently**.
3. Janine lived **here**.
4. There is money **everywhere**.



As mentioned, if the adverb is of *definite time* it will be placed at the end of the sentence.

1. I did it **yesterday**.
2. We can discuss it **tomorrow**.
3. Let's go to Paris **next week**.

However, if it is an *indefinite period of time*, it will go between the subject and main verb.

1. We **often** go to Paris in the springtime.
 2. Debbie **regularly** swims here.
 3. Bobby and Audrey **always** loved fishing by the lake.
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Order of Adverbs

Adverb order is so important it has clear rules. The order of adverbs, sometimes also called the ROYAL ORDER OF ADVERBS, can help us determine sentence structure too. In short, the adverbs get preference (are placed first) in the following order:

1. Adverbs of manner.
2. Adverbs of place.
3. Adverbs of frequency.
4. Adverbs of time.
5. Adverbs of purpose.

+ Consider this sentence: +

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“I run (verb) *quickly* (manner) *down the road* (place) *every morning* (frequency) *before school* (time) *because* (purpose) I might miss the bus.”

While it is good to remember the order of adverbs, there is always flexibility with language, and we have already mentioned that adverbs of time and frequency can be placed at the start of a sentence to change the emphasis.

So, bottom line: think of the order of adverbs as more of a guideline than a rule that **can't be broken**.

Adverbs List

1. Many adverbs end in “-ly”. This makes it very easy to spot the adverbs in most sentences.

Examples: Abruptly, boldly, carefully, deliberately, excitedly, financially, horribly, mildly, naughtily, openly, poorly, quickly, sadly, terribly, willingly, yearly, etc.

2. Some adverbs tell us where the action happened. These are known as adverbs of place.

Examples: Everywhere, Here, Inside, There, Underground, Upstairs, etc

Adverbs List

3. Certain adverbs let us know when or how often the action happened. These are known as adverbs of time and adverbs of frequency.

Examples: After, Always, Before, Later, Now, Today, Yesterday

4. Many adverbs tell us the extent of the action.

Examples: Almost, Enough, So, Too, Quite, Rather, Very

Adverbs List

5. Some adverbs are used as intensifiers.

Examples: Absolutely, Certain, Completely, Heartily, Really, etc

6. Certain adverbs called adverbs of manner tell us about the way in which something was done.

Examples: Briskly, Cheerfully, Expectantly, Randomly, Willingly, etc

Some groups of words serve the same functions as adverbs. These are known as adverb clauses. Be sure to read the [adverb clause](#) section to learn new ways to make your sentences even more interesting.