

Adverbs

Adverbs modify verbs. They tell you *How* something is done.

Example: *How does he/she sing? - She sings beautifully.*

Adverbs are often formed by adding -ly to an adjective

Example: beautiful - beautifully, careful - carefully

Be Careful!

Some adjectives don't change in the adverb form. The most important of these are:

fast - fast, hard - hard (NEVER say "fastly" or "hardly" with that meaning)

Good is probably the most important exception. The adverb form of 'good' is 'well'.

Adverbs can also modify an adjective. In this case, the adverb is placed before the adjective.

Example: She is extremely happy. They are absolutely sure.

Be Careful!

Do not use 'very' with adjectives that express an increased quality of a basic adjective

Example: *good - fantastic - incredible ...etc.* In this case, you can use words as "*absolutely*", "*completely*" ...etc

Types of adverbs:

1) Adverbs of frequency : they say how often something happens.

Adverbs of frequency (always, never, sometimes, often, etc.) usually come before the main verb, but **AFTER** the verb "to be".

Examples: *He is often late for class. Do you always eat in a restaurant?*

The adverbs "*Sometimes*", "*Usually*" and "*Normally*" can also go at the beginning:

Sometimes I go away at weekends / I sometimes go away at weekends

Be Careful!

Adverbs of frequency expressing infrequency are not normally used in the negative or question form. **DON'T SAY!**: "Does she rarely eat fish?" or "They don't seldom go to the cinema"

Be Careful!

"Always", "usually" and "normally" are not used on their own as an answer for "how often".

How often do you watch TV at night? Always → WRONG

Every night → OK

Do you ever listen to classical music? Usually → WRONG

Quite often → OK

2) Adverbs of time : they say when something happens.

He'll get home soon – I watched a film last night

These adverbs usually go at the end of the sentence, but again, they can also go at the beginning

Soon he'll get home – Last night I watched a film

3) Adverbs of degree : they say how much something is done

She took a bit of cake – I nearly got killed in the crash – She's very sensible

They go BEFORE an adjective (*very interesting*) or another adverb (*almost always*)

4) Sentence adverbs : they make a comment (often personal) about something

Fortunately, the ambulance arrived on time

When are you leaving? Hopefully, on Friday

They usually go at the beginning of a sentence

Other adverbs not included in the previous list: "only", "probably", "just" ...etc. normally go before the main verb and after the verb "to be"

5) Adverb phrases: They are adverbs made up of more than one word

From time to time / now and again / once--twice a / once—twice every / Once in a blue moon ...

They should come either at the beginning or at the end of the sentence.

→ I haven't got time because of my job, so I go out with my friends **once in a blue moon**

→ **Twice a week** I go swimming. It's very relaxing, and it helps me keep fit.

89 Adverbs and word order

A Types of adverbs

Type	Tells us ...	Examples
Manner	how	slowly, suddenly, eagerly, anxiously, carefully, hard
Place	where	here, there, upstairs, outside, nearby
Time	when	now, then, soon, yesterday, once
Frequency	how often	sometimes, always, ever, never, usually, occasionally
Degree	how much	very, quite, almost, completely, fully, really
Sentence		certainly, probably, maybe, obviously, clearly, luckily, (un)fortunately

B Where do adverbs go?

There are three main positions for adverbs: front, mid and end.

Front	Mid	End
<i>Then the man's hands suddenly began to shake violently.</i>		

Front position is at the beginning of a sentence:

Sometimes I get up in the night. Perhaps the letter is from Celia.

Mid position is after the first auxiliary (e.g. *They are just finishing*). If there is no auxiliary, it is before the main verb (e.g. *I really hate it*).

AUXILIARY	ADVERB	MAIN VERB
<i>The workmen</i>	<i>are</i>	<i>just finishing.</i>
<i>James</i>	<i>has</i>	<i>always liked Fiona.</i>
<i>We</i>	<i>don't</i>	<i>often play this game.</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>really</i>	<i>hate housework.</i>
<i>You</i>	<i>probably</i>	<i>left the bag on the bus.</i>

Note the word order in questions:

Has James always liked Fiona?
Do you often play this game?

When the verb is **be** on its own, the adverb comes after it:
Sally is often in a bad temper. You're probably right.

End position is at the end of a sentence:

The crowd waited patiently. The two men shook hands warmly.
An adverb does not usually go between the verb and direct object:
I like classical music very much. NOT ~~I like very much classical music.~~
But an adverb can go before a long object:
Detectives examined carefully the contents of the dead man's pockets.

C Adverbs of manner

Adverbs of manner can go in mid position or end position:

She eagerly tore off the paper. I slowly sank into a deep sleep.
He spread the butter thickly. We arrived safely.

D Adverbs of place and time

These adverbs and adverbial phrases usually go in end position:

Is there a phone box nearby? People didn't have cars then.
We're meeting by the entrance. Debbie wasn't very well last week.
Did you have a nice time in Paris? I'll see you before very long.

Some short adverbs of time (e.g. *soon, now*) can go in mid position:

We were soon travelling through open countryside.
For **yet, still** and **already** see Unit 90.

E Adverbs of frequency

Adverbs of frequency usually go in mid position:

You're always in such a hurry. I sometimes feel depressed.
I've often wondered about that. Do you usually work so late?

Normally, usually, often, sometimes and **occasionally** can also go in front position or end position, where they have more emphasis:
Normally there's no difficulty. I feel depressed sometimes.

Phrases like **every day, once a week** or **most evenings** go in front or end position:

Every day we go jogging. I do aerobics three times a week.
There's a news summary every hour. We watch television most evenings.

F Sentence adverbs

These can come in any position, although front position is the most usual:

Fortunately the weather was fine. Maybe you'll win a free holiday.
We'll probably have to wait hours. There's no lift of course.

In a negative sentence, **probably** and **certainly** come before the auxiliary + **n't** (e.g. *won't*):
We probably won't be in time. I certainly didn't expect a present!

G End position

There can be more than one adverb or adverbial phrase in end position. Usually a single-word adverb comes before a phrase:

ADVERB	ADVERBIAL PHRASE
<i>They landed</i>	<i>safely on a small airfield.</i>
<i>I always eat</i>	<i>here at lunch time.</i>

When there is a close link in meaning between a verb and an adverb, then the adverb goes next to the verb. For example, a phrase of place goes next to **go, come, move** etc.:
I usually go to bed early. My parents moved to London in 1985.

But often two adverbial phrases can go in either order:

The concert was held at the Arts Centre last night.
It was held last night at the Arts Centre.

111 PLACE THE ADVERBS

Put the adverbs in the correct places in the following sentences.

- 1 I visit my parents at the weekend. (*usually*)
- 2 I watch television, though I listen to the radio. (*hardly ever, frequently*)
- 3 I don't understand why she didn't come to my party. (*still*)
- 4 He has had three cars and they have been Volvos. (*all*)
- 5 I've got two sisters and they're married. (*both*)
- 6 Have you eaten oysters? (*ever*)
- 7 I'm going to get married next year. (*probably*)
- 8 I do wish she'd speak louder. I can hear a word she's saying. (*hardly*)
- 9 Sue's not very adventurous. She hasn't been abroad. (*even*)
- 10 My brother-in-law loses his temper. He's so calm and self-controlled. (*hardly ever, always*)
- 11 I disagree with you. Men are more violent than women. (*completely, definitely*)
- 12 He goes to bed early but reads for hours before he goes to sleep. (*always, sometimes*)
- 13 I go jogging these days. There's enough time. (*rarely, never*)
- 14 My brother plays for the local football team. (*occasionally*)
- 15 Peter is a good singer and he plays the guitar. (*also*)
- 16 Cathy has started learning Spanish. (*just*)
- 17 I haven't finished doing my homework. I've got two more exercises to do. (*yet, still*)
- 18 You'll pick up French if you spend the whole summer in France. (*certainly*)
- 19 I saw Jane at the party and I'm going to tell her husband about it. (*definitely*)
- 20 We get very tired after playing squash. (*always*)
- 21 Geoff and Ted don't quarrel. (*often*)
- 22 Pauline Brown? Yes, I saw her yesterday! (*only*)
- 23 'Is Brian a good student?'
'Well he works very hard.' (*certainly*)
- 24 He's got three brothers. They are policemen. (*all*)
- 25 She plays the piano and comes first in most competitions. (*beautifully, usually*)