Adverbs

Adverbs describe verbs and modify adjectives and other adverbs. Adverbs, unlike adjectives, do not modify nouns. Adverbs can also modify phrases, clauses, and sentences. Adverbs answer one of the following questions: When? Where? Why? How? Under what conditions? and To what extent?

Example:

* The teacher had to speak loudly to be heard over the children. (Loudly modifies the verb speak.)
* The children were really bad during the movie. (Really modifies the adjective bad.)
* John approached the wounded dog very slowly. (Very modifies the adverb slowly.)
* Clearly, Sarah did not understand the directions. (Clearly modifies the sentence.)
* The box is still below the stairs. (Still modifies the phrase “below the stairs.”)

Types of adverbs:

* Adverbs of Manner An adverb of manner answers the question How? Adverbs of manner include: badly, beautifully, better, bravely, cheerfully, fast, hard, quickly, slowly, inadequately, healthy, well, etc. Example: Sarah slowly walked over the rocky beach. (Slowly answers the question: How did Sarah walk?)
* Adverbs of Place An adverb of place answers the question Where? Adverbs of place include: above, away, below, down, here, inside, near, outside, there, up, etc. Example: Susan placed the boxes above the file cabinet. (Above answers the question: Where did Susan place the boxes?) Adverbs of Degree An adverb of degree answers the question How much? It describes the strength and intensity at which something happens.
* Adverbs of degree include: almost, completely, enough, entirely, extremely, hardly, just, little, much, nearly, quite, rather, very, too, etc. Example: John worked very hard to complete his part of the project. (Very answers the question: How hard did John work?)
* Adverbs of Frequency An adverb of frequency answers the question How often? Adverbs of frequency include: always, never, usually, frequently, occasionally, rarely, seldom, sometimes, etc. Example: Bob always forgets to check his email before class begins. (Before answers the question: How often does Bob forget to check his email?)
* Interrogative Adverbs An interrogative adverb introduces a question.

Interrogative adverbs are usually placed at the beginning of the sentence. Interrogative adverbs include: how, when, why, and where. Example: When will John’s plane arrive from Atlanta?

* Conjunctive Adverbs Conjunctive adverbs serve as transitional words, joining and relating independent clauses. Conjunctive adverbs include: accordingly, also, alternatively, certainly, consequently, finally, nevertheless, moreover, previously, therefore, etc. For a list of more conjunctive adverbs, refer to the Writing Center’s handout Common Conjunctions. Example: We plan to leave early in the morning; therefore, we will go to bed early.

Forming Adverbs

Adding –ly to the end Many adverbs are formed by adding –ly to an adjective. Example: clear/clearly hard/hardly

Irregular Adverbs Some adverbs do not use the –ly ending. These adverbs do not have a particular form. Following is a list of some of the most common irregular adverbs: already, also, always, here, never, not, now, often, quite, seldom, soon, still, then, there, too, very well.

Formation of adverbs:



But not all words that end in -ly are adverbs. The following -ly words, for example, are all adjectives:

* friendly, lovely, lonely, neighbourly

And some adverbs have no particular form. Look at these examples:

* well, fast, very, never, always, often, still

note:

Look at these two sentences:

1. I am a fast driver
2. I drive fast

In the first sentences, “fast” is an adjective and “driver” is the noun.

In the second sentence, “drive” is the verb and “fast” is the adverb.

Did you notice? Fast can be both an adverb and an adjective!

1. **Fast**

Fast is an adjective and it’s also an adverb. Look at this example:

* That is a **fast**car.

“Car” is the noun and “fast” is the adjective describing the noun.

**Adjectives come before nouns to describe them (adjective + noun)**

Now, Let’s have a look at another sentence:

* He is driving really **fast**.

“Driving” is the verb of the sentence. “fast” comes **after the verb**and is the adverb of the sentence.

Therefore, “fast” can be both an adjective and an adverb!

1. **Fine**

Another word which can be both an adjective and an adverb is “Fine”. Look at this sentence:

* That is a fine work of art.

In this sentence, “fine” means very good.

“Work of art” is the **noun** and “fine” is the **adjective.** Now, Let’s look at another sentence:

* You are doing just fine.

This sentences means “don’t worry because what you are doing is OK”. “Doing” is the verb and fine is the**adverb**that has come after the verb.

So, “fine” is an adverb and an adjective with the same form!

1. **Hard**

Hard can be an adjective and an adverb. Have a look at this sentence:

* There were many hard questions in the exam.

“Questions” is the **noun** and “hard” is the **adjective**that comes before the noun. Look at another example:

* I studied hard for the exam.

In this sentence, “study” is the **verb** and “hard” is the **adverb.**

“Hard” can be used as both an adverb and an adjective!

1. **High**

High means **above the ground**. For instance:

* That is a very high mountain.

” Mountain” is the noun and “high” is the adjective an so it comes before the noun. Let’s see another example:

* Throw the ball as high as you can!

Here, somebody gives you a ball and then asks you to throw it as high as you can. “Throw” is the verb and “high” is used as an adverb to define the verb. Let’s have a look at another example:

* I can jump really high.

“Jump” plays the role of a verb here and “high” is the adverb.

Therefore, “high” is an adverb and an adjective with the same form!

1. **Late**

“Late” is sometimes used as an adjective and sometimes as an adverb. Look at this sentence:

* My friend is always late.

“Late” is the adjective that describes my friend.

Let’s see another example:

* I hate arriving late.

It means that I don’t like to arrive late. I like arriving on time!

“Arrive” is the **verb**, and “late” is the adverb because it’s  after the verb and describes the verb.

“Late” is often used as an adverb and sometimes as an adjective.

1. **Low**

“Low” is the opposite of “high” and can be used as an adjective and also an adverb depending on the situation. For instance:

* He said that with a low voice.

“Voice” has the role of the verb and “low” is used as an adjective. Now, look at this one:

* That plane is flying low.

In this sentence, “Low” has come after the verb and is defining it, thus it is an **adverb**, and “fly” is the **verb**.

“Low” can be an adverb and an adjective with no change in form!

1. **Straight**

“Straight” can also be used as an adverb and an adjective. Let’s see an example:

* A straight road goes straight from one place to another.

“Road” is the **noun** and“go” is the **verb**. The first “straight” is used as an **adverb**that modifies the verb and the second one is the **adjective,**describing the noun “road”.



 4 main parts of speech and how they work together

Apart from adjectives and adverbs which have the same form, there are some adjectives that have 2 different forms of adverb! Confusing? NO! Let me explain!

**3 adjectives with two different forms of adverb**

Have a look at these three adjectives:

* **Hard**
* **High**
* **Late**

The adverb of “**High”** is high, the adverb of “**Late”**is late and as you can guess, the adverb of “**Hard**” is hard. For example:

* They tried **hard** to win the game!
* He kicked the ball **high** into the air.
* Can you stay **late**?

Now pay attention to these three words:

* **Hardly**
* **Highly**
* **Lately**

### ****Hardly****

“Hardly” means **almost not**. For example:

* Can you speak up? I can hardly hear you.

This sentence means “I almost can’t hear you”.

* Today is foggy, I can’t drive because I can hardly see the road.

This sentence means: “I can almost not see the road”.

### ****Highly****

“Highly” is an **adverb** **of degree** that describes an adjective. For instance:

* Smoking is highly addictive.

Here, the adverb is used with the meaning of “very”. It shows the degree of the adjective “addictive”. Let’s see another example:

* I highly recommend this restaurant.

Again, highly stands for “very” and it shows the degree. It means I recommend this restaurant very much.

### ****Lately****

“Lately” has nothing to do with being on time. It has a completely different meaning. “Lately” means **recently** or **around now**. For instance:

* I have been feeling ill lately.

It means that I haven’t been feeling so good recently. Here is another example:

* He hasn’t been too well lately.

This sentence means “he has recently been sick and unwell”.