

## 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 Time*

An adverb of time answers the question *When?* Adverbs of time include: *after, always, before, during, early, later, never, now, often, rarely, recently, sometimes, soon, then, today, tomorrow, usually, yesterday, etc.*

Example: John will attend the soccer game **after** he finishes his homework. (**After** answers the question: When will John attend the soccer game?)

#### *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.*

## Adverb Placement

Adverbs are flexible in their placement; therefore, they can be placed just about anywhere within the sentence.

At the beginning of a sentence or a clause

Example: **Clearly**, John has a problem arriving to work on time.

At the end of a sentence or a clause

Example: Sarah and John attend the opera **frequently**.

After the verb

Example: Bob and John have **always** participated in the soccer tournament.

Between the subject and the verb

Example: Sarah **rarely** forgets to call home when she is out late.

- There is another classification of adverbs considering meaning such as:

### 1. Qualitative adverbs

a. **Adverbs of manner:** desperately, fast, perfectly

### 2. Quantitative adverbs

a. **Adverbs of degree:** extremely, hardly, too, very

b. **Adverbs of measure:** long

### 3. Circumstantial Adverbs – Time Adverbs

a. **Adverbs of definite time:** yesterday, then, now, in the morning

b. **Adverbs of indefinite time:** soon, always, often, sometimes, ever  
Subgroups of Adverbs of time can answer the questions like:

*Adverbs of definite time* answering the question When? – yesterday, last week, early, late.

*Adverbs of frequency*, answering the question How often? – always, never, seldom, sometimes  
*Adverbs of duration*, answering the question How long? – hours, for hours, the whole night, since yesterday