

University of M'sila

Department of English
First Year LMD Students

Course: Grammar
Teacher: Miss. Hamouma
Lecturer: Ms. Djaidja

LESSON FOUR: ADVERBS

An **adverb** can be a word (incredibly) or a phrase (last night) that describes or modifies a verb, an adjective or another adverb, and sometimes a sentence, but not a noun or a pronoun. The subsections of this lesson are:

1. Types of Adverbs
2. Forms of Adverbs
3. Comparison of Adverbs
4. Position of Adverbs

*I dreamed about you **last night**. (Adverb: last night; verb: dreamed)*

*The monster was **incredibly** ugly. (Adverb: incredibly; adjective: ugly)*

*The heart patient collapsed **quite suddenly**. (Adverb: suddenly; Adverb: quite)*

***Fortunately**, we were in time to buy the last tickets. (Adverb: fortunately, modifying a sentence)*

In many sentences, the adverb comes after the verb.

*He called **yesterday**.*

*The train will arrive **soon**.*

*He strove **hard** to reach the top.*

*The patient is sleeping **soundly**.*

Unlike **adjectives**, **adverbs** do not modify **nouns**.

Correct: *That woman has a **beautiful** daughter. (Adjective)*

Incorrect: *That woman has a **beautifully** daughter. (Adverb)*

Correct: *He found the exam quite **hard**. (Adjective)*

Incorrect : *He found the exam quite **hardly**. (Adverb)*

Correct: *We heard a **loud** explosion and then saw **thick** smoke. (Adjective)*

Incorrect : *We heard a **loudly** explosion and then saw **thickly** smoke. (Adverb)*

Some **adverbs** and **adjectives** share the same word. Examples of such words include **far**, **hard**, and **long**.

*I got a pair of shoes **cheap** in the sale. (Adverb)*

*I got a **cheap** pair of shoes in the sale. (Adjective)*

*We don't live **far** away from here. (Adverb)*

*Where we live isn't **far** from here. (Adjective)*

*She worked quite **hard**. (Adverb)*

*She found the work quite **hard**. (Adjective)*

*If we exercise regularly, we may live **longer**. (Adverb)*

*If we exercise regularly, we may live a **longer** life. (Adjective)*

*You have written the name **wrong**. (Adverb)*

*You have written the **wrong** name. (Adjective)*

1. Types of Adverbs

There are different kinds of adverbs expressing different meanings. The following are some of the common ones.

1. Adverbs of time: An adverb of time tells us when something is done or happens. We use it **at the beginning or at the end of a sentence**. We use it as a form of emphasis when we place it at the beginning. Adverbs of time include **afterwards**, **already**, **immediately**, **last month**, **now**, **soon**, **then**, and **yesterday**.

*He collapsed and died **yesterday**.*
*His factory was burned down **a few months ago**.*
***Last week**, we were stuck in the lift for an hour.*

2. Adverbs of place: An adverb of place tells us where something is done or happens. We use it **after the verb, object or at the end of a sentence**. Adverbs of place include words such as **above, below, here, outside, over there, there, under, upstairs**.

*We can stop **here** for lunch.*
*The schoolboy was knocked **over** by a school bus.*
*They rushed for their lives when fire broke out in the floor **below**.*

3. Adverbs of manner: An adverb of manner tells us how something is done or happens. Most adverbs of manner end in **-ly** such as **badly, happily, sadly, slowly, quickly**, and others that include **well, hard, fast**, etc.

*The brothers were **badly** injured in the fight.*
*They had to act **fast** to save the others floating in the water.*
*At the advanced age of 88, she still sang very **well**.*

4. Adverbs of degree: An adverb of degree tells us the level or extent that something is done or happens. Words of adverb of degree are **almost, much, nearly, quite, really, so, too, very**, etc.

*It was **too** dark for us to find our way out of the cave. (Before adjective)*
*The referee had to stop the match when it began to rain **very** heavily. (Before adverb)*
*Her daughter is **quite** fat for her age.*
*The accident victim **nearly** died from his injuries.*
*After all these years, she is still feeling **very** sad about her father's death.*

5. Adverbs of frequency: An adverb of frequency tells us how often something is done or happens. Words used as adverbs of frequency include **again, almost, always, ever, frequently, generally, hardly ever, nearly, nearly always, never, occasionally, often, rarely, seldom, sometimes, twice, usually, and weekly**.

*They were **almost** fifty when they got married.*
*He **hardly ever** say something nice to his wife.*
*While overseas, he **frequently** phoned home.*
*She is not **nearly** always right although she thinks she is **always** right.*
*He complained that she **never** smiled back.*
*We only write to each other very **occasionally**.*
*Peter **seldom** reads the Bible.*
***Sometimes** he stays late in the office to complete his work.*
*Our cat was bitten **twice** by the same dog.*
*The man **usually** proposes marriage.*

2. Forms of Adverbs

There are four forms of adverbs: adverbs formed by adding **-ly to an adjective**, adverbs that **share identical words with an adjective**, adverbs **not derived from an adjective or any other word**, and adverbs derived from **other parts of speech**.

a) Most adverbs are formed by **adding -ly to an adjective**:

*He had a **sudden** heart attack while jogging. (Adjective)*
*He **suddenly** had a heart attack while jogging. (Adverb)*
*She had a **quick** walk to get there on time. (Adjective)*
*She walked **quickly** to get there on time. (Adverb)*

Spelling notes:

- (1) A final **y** changes to **i**: *happy, happily. easy–easily*
- (2) A final **e** is kept before **ly**: *extreme, extremely*. **Exceptions:** *true, due, whole* become *truly, duly, wholly*.
- (3) Adjectives ending in a **consonant + le** drop the **e** and add **y**: *gentle, gently simple, simply*

Note that the adverb of **good** is **well**.

b) Adverbs that share identical words with an adjective:

*He found the exam quite **hard**. (Adjective)*

*He failed his exam as he didn't try very **hard**. (Adverb)*

*The two brothers live on **opposite** sides of the city. (Adjective)*

*She has a brother who lives **opposite** to her. (Adverb)*

<u>Adverbs and adjectives with the same form</u>			
<i>back</i>	<i>hard</i>	<i>little</i>	<i>right</i>
<i>deep</i>	<i>high</i>	<i>long</i>	<i>short</i>
<i>direct</i>	<i>ill</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>still</i>
<i>early</i>	<i>just</i>	<i>much/more/most</i>	<i>straight</i>
<i>enough</i>	<i>kindly</i>	<i>near</i>	<i>well</i>
<i>far</i>	<i>late</i>	<i>pretty</i>	<i>wrong</i>
<i>fast</i>	<i>left</i>		

Used as adverbs:	Used as adjectives:
<i>Come back soon.</i>	<i>the back door</i>
<i>You can dial Rome direct</i>	<i>the most direct route</i>
<i>The train went fast</i>	<i>a fast train</i>
<i>They worked hard. (energetically)</i>	<i>The work is hard</i>
<i>an ill-made road</i>	<i>You look ill/well</i>
<i>Turn right here.</i>	<i>the right answer</i>
<i>She went straight home</i>	<i>a straight line</i>
<i>He led us wrong</i>	<i>This is the wrong way.</i>

c) Adverbs that are not derived from an adjective or any other word such as as, even, how, never, next, now, rather, so, soon, still, then, too, etc.

*He doesn't **even** know where the Pacific Ocean is.*

*He said he had **never** been to a circus.*

*She has got **rather** a lot of money to spend at this time of the month.*

*She has eaten two big pizzas and is **still** hungry.*

d) Adverbs are also formed from other parts of speech such as past participle and present participle

*Nick **hurried** to answer the telephone. (Verb)*

*Nick moved **hurriedly** to answer the telephone. (Adverb)*

*He's **frightening** us with the speed he's driving. (present participle)*

*He's driving **frighteningly** close to the edge of the pavement. (Adverb)*

3. Comparison of Adverbs

A/ With adverbs of two or more syllables we form the comparative and superlative by putting **more** and **most** before the positive form:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
<i>Quickly</i>	<i>more quickly</i>	<i>most quickly</i>
<i>Fortunately</i>	<i>more fortunately</i>	<i>most fortunately</i>

Examples:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
angrily	more angrily	most angrily
brightly	more brightly	most brightly
dimly	more dimly	most dimly

B/ Single-syllable adverbs, however, and early, add “er”, “est”:

<i>hard</i>	<i>harder</i>	<i>hardest</i>
<i>early</i>	<i>earlier</i>	<i>earliest (note the y becomes i)</i>

Examples:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
early	earlier	earliest
fast	faster	fastest
hard	harder	hardest
high	higher	highest

C/ Irregular comparisons:

Adverb	Comparative	Superlative
Well	<i>better</i>	<i>best</i>
badly	<i>worse</i>	<i>worst</i>
little	<i>less</i>	<i>least</i>
much	<i>more</i>	<i>most</i>
far	<i>farther</i>	<i>farthest (of distance only)</i>
far	<i>further</i>	<i>furthest (used more widely)</i>

Examples:

*Of the two teddy bears, which do you like **better**?*
*This has to be the **farthest** I have ever walked in my life.*

Constructions with comparisons:

When the same verb is required in both clauses we normally **use an auxiliary for the second verb.**

A/With the positive form we use **as ... as** with an affirmative verb, and **as/so ... as** with a negative verb:

*He worked **as slowly as** he dared.*
*He doesn't snore **as/so loudly as** you do.*
*It didn't take **as/so long as** I expected.*

B/ With the comparative form we use **than**. The comparative form is used to **compare two things**:

*He eats **more quickly than** I do/than me.*
*He played **better than** he had ever played.*

*They arrived **earlier than** I expected.*
*You speak **more loudly than** a loudspeaker.*
*Sirius shines **more brightly than** all the other stars.*

the + comparative ... the + comparative is also possible:
The earlier you start the sooner you'll be back.

C/ The superlative form is used to **compare three or more things**. With **the superlative** it is possible to use **of + noun**:

*He arrived **the earliest**, so he had to wait for the others.*
*Why do you have to speak **the most loudly** of all at the meeting?*
*Of all the girls, your sister sang **the most sweetly**.*

*He went **(the) furthest of** the explorers:* But this construction is not very common and such a sentence would normally be expressed by a comparative, as shown above. A **superlative (without the) + of all** is quite common, but all here often refers to other actions by the same subject:
*He likes swimming **best of all**.* (*better than he likes anything else*), **of all** can then be omitted.

4. Position of Adverbs

Adverbs should come as near as possible to the verbs, adjective or other adverbs they qualify. This is because the meaning of a sentence can change with the change in the position of the adverb.

Compare:

Only he lent me five cents. (= He and nobody else lent me five cents.)
He **only** lent me five cents. (= He only lent me the money, he didn't do anything else.)
He lent me **only** five cents. (= He didn't lend me more than five cents.)
He lent **only** me five cents. (i.e. to nobody else)
You will have noticed that the meaning of the sentence changes considerably with the change in the position of the adverb **only**.

Most adverbs, however, can be placed in different positions with no significant change in meaning. There are, nevertheless, **some rules** regarding the position of adverbs.

Rule 01: After the auxiliary verb (be) that is used as the main verb

- *She is **always** quick to point out other people's faults.*
- *As usual, they are **very** late.*
- *The boys were **incredibly** lucky to be alive after what happened.*

Rule 02: After the main verb if there is no auxiliary verb

A/ If there is no object, place the adverb immediately after the verb.

- *He walked **slowly**.*
- *She smiled **beautifully**.*
- *The sisters dressed **beautifully** for the occasion.*

B) or after the object when there is one.

- *He gave her the money **reluctantly**.*
- *They speak English **well**.*
- *He took the matter **lightly**.*

The **length of the object** affects the position of the adverb. If the object is **short**, we have **verb + object + adverb**. But if the **object is long** we usually put the **adverb before the verb**:

- *She **carefully** picked up all the bits of broken glass.*
- *He **angrily** denied that he had stolen the documents.*
- *They **secretly** decided to leave the town.*

Rule 03: With compound tenses, **the** adverb goes after **the auxiliary verb** and before the main verb

They **have never** invited us to their parties.

I **have always** wanted to be a writer.

He **was greatly** praised for his novel idea.

We **must always** obey our parents.

He **is still** working at the sum

Rule 04: Adverbs of Frequency normally come before the verb. Examples are:

Group "a": *always, continually, frequently, occasionally, often, once, twice, periodically, repeatedly, sometimes, usually.*

Group "b": *ever, hardly ever, never, rarely, scarcely ever, seldom.*

Adverbs in both groups are normally placed:

1. After the main verb "**to be**":
 - *He is **always** in time for meals.*
 - *He is **usually** late for office.*
2. Before other main verbs:
 - *They **sometimes** stay up all night.*
 - *They **seldom** visit us.*
3. With compound tenses, they are placed after the first auxiliary, or—with interrogative verbs—after "auxiliary + subject":
 - *He can **never** understand.*
 - *You have **often** been told not to do that.*
 - *Have you **ever** ridden a camel?*

Note:

Occasionally, sometimes, often, frequently and **usually** can also go at the **beginning or at the end** of a sentence:

- ***Sometimes**, they visit him.*
- *I miss him **occasionally**.*

Rarely and **seldom** can also go at **the end of a sentence** (often with "very"):

- *We see them **rarely**.*
- *John eats meat very **seldom**.*

In formal, literary English, **adverbs of indefinite frequency which have a negative meaning** can go in front position. The **subject must come after an auxiliary verb or a main verb be** in sentences like this:

Never had **we** encountered such an unreasonable official, (*not* Never we had encountered...)

Not once was **he** at home when I phoned, (*not* Not once he was...)

Other adverbs like this include **hardly ever, rarely, seldom**, and also **at no time**. If there is no auxiliary verb, we use **do**. Compare:

He **never** admitted that his team played badly, *and*

At no time/ never did **he** admit that his team played badly, (*not* At no time he admitted...)

Rule 05: Adverbs of **place** are like adverbs of manner. They come **after the direct object or the verb**.

- I met **him** *here*. (The adverb of place *here* comes after the direct object **him**.)
- He **sat** *there*. (The adverb of place *there* comes after the verb **sat**.)

They sometimes go **in front position**, especially in writing.

- **Here** *she sat*.
- **Outside**, *there was a small pond*.

Rule 07: Adverbs of **time** usually go in **end** position. They sometimes go in **front position** especially if we want to emphasize the adverb.

- *I'm flying to Edinburgh* **tomorrow**.
- **Today**, *I'm going to clean the house*.

Rule 08: Adverbs of **viewpoints and comments** can take place at the **beginning, mid or end** position.

- **Personally**, *I'd rather not go out*.
- *This must, frankly, be the craziest idea anyone has ever had*.
- **Unfortunately**, *I forgot my swimming costume so I had to sit on the side and watch*.
- *They missed the bus, apparently*.

Rule 09: An adverb (especially an adverb of degree) which modifies an adjective, verb or another adverb comes before it.

- She is **very** beautiful. (Here the adverb **very** modifies the adjective **beautiful**.)
- *I* **really** *like those pink flowers*.
- They are **highly** competitive. (Here the adverb **highly** modifies the adjective **competitive**.)
- The girl sang **so** sweetly. (Here the adverb **so** modifies the adverb **sweetly**.)

Rule 10: Note that the adverb **enough** comes after the adjective it modifies.

- *He was* **foolish enough** *to trust her*.
- *She is* **old enough** *to do things on her own*.
- *Our army is* **strong enough** *to defend our country*.

Rule 11: The words **only, merely, even, not and never** are usually placed before the words they modify.

- *I* **merely** *wanted to know his name*.
- *She was* **not** *clever enough to see through his scheme*.
- *He* **never** *keeps his word*.

Order of Adverbs

When there is more than one adverb in end position, they usually go in this order: **manner, place, time**:

You start off [manner]slowly [time]in the beginning.

Not: *You start off in the beginning slowly.*

James played [manner] brilliantly [place] in the match on [time]Saturday. (preferred to *James played brilliantly on Saturday in the match*.)