

Adverbs

An adverb is the part of speech which changes or qualifies the meaning of a verb, an adjective or other adverb. For example, if we say that *Robert drives*, this is a simple statement which tells us about Robert's skill or capability. However, if we say that *Robert drives slowly*, we are giving more information about his skill because of the adverb *slowly*. Sometimes by adding an adverb, we also add a crucial piece of information, e.g. *I need to send this email immediately*.

Below are some examples of sentences in which you can see adverbs modifying adjectives or other adverbs. In both cases, the adverb which modifies an adjective or an adverb comes first.

The manager was *really angry*. (adverb + adjective)

The process of leasing was *incredibly easy*. (adverb + adjective)

He spoke *quite fast* when he delivered the annual accounts report. (adverb + adverb)

Think about it *very carefully* before deciding. (adverb + adverb)

Most adverbs are formed by adding the *-ly* suffix to adjectives, e.g. *quick* (adjective) – *quickly* (adverb), *careful* (adjective) – *carefully* (adverb). With some adverbs there are some special spelling rules when we add the suffix.

- The adjectives that end in a consonant + *-le* lose the final *e*: *simple* – *simply*, *comfortable* – *comfortably*.
- The adjectives that end in a consonant + *-y* change the *y* into *i* before adding *-ly*: *happy* – *happily*, *easy* – *easily*.
- The adjectives that end in *-ic* add *-ally*: *basic* – *basically*, *economic* – *economically*.

Some adverbs are irregular in the way that they look exactly like adjectives or they are not derived from adjectives: *fast*, *hard*, *well*, *never*, *often*, *always*, etc.

There are four basic types of adverbs:

- **Adverbs of manner** (how?): *angrily*, *accidentally*, *carefully*, *easily*, *honestly*, *perfectly*, etc.

Examples: There was a queue of people waiting patiently in front of the desk.

The team worked hard on the project.

- **Adverbs of place** (where?): *here*, *backwards*, *somewhere*, *near*, *nearby*, etc.

Examples: Her business partner lives nearby.

The file must be somewhere on your desk.

- **Adverbs of time and frequency** (when?, how often?): *yesterday*, *now*, *tonight*, *sometimes*, *weekly*, etc.

Examples: I want that report tonight.

They rarely arrive at work before 9am.

- **Adverbs of degree** (how much?, to what degree?): *very*, *entirely*, *absolutely*, *hardly*, *incredibly*, *totally*, etc.

Examples: She entirely agrees with his suggestion to cut the budget for next year.

He drove his BMW quite dangerously.

A. Complete the second sentence with the adverbial form of the italicised adjective in the first sentence. For example: William is usually a *careful* driver. He always drives *carefully* when children are in the car.

1. Mr Robinson is a *polite* young man. He asked _____ if he could borrow my notes for the meeting.
2. I ordered a *manual* transmission. Are the windows operated _____?
3. The new teacher is a *brave* woman. She _____ challenged the principal and the school board.
4. There was a *rapid* change in the weather. The temperature dropped _____.
5. I thought that was an *easy* assignment. I expected to pass _____.
6. Their office is on a *quiet* suburban street. Even the dogs bark _____.
7. My friend is a *fast* driver. She drives her car _____.
8. Mrs Jenkins is a *patient* teacher. She explains everything _____.
9. Our boss was very *happy* today. During the meeting he talked _____ about the new project.
10. They think English is an *easy* language. They learn English _____.

Key: 1. politely, 2. manually, 3. bravely, 4. rapidly, 5. easily, 6. quietly, 7. fast, 8. patiently, 9. happily, 10. easily

B. Underline the correct option. For example: The spaceship landed smoothly. *Smoothly* modifies a) an adjective or b) a verb.

1. The old system runs extremely slowly. *Extremely* modifies a) an adjective or b) an adverb.
2. Your colleague is quite shy, isn't she? *Quite* modifies a) an adjective or b) a verb.
3. He never buys fruit at a grocery store. *Never* is a) a preposition or b) an adverb.
4. They rarely organise office parties since there is not enough budget for that. *Rarely* is a) an adverb of manner or b) an adverb of frequency.
5. The deputy said he was sincerely sorry for misusing the tax funds. *Sincerely* is a) an adverb of degree or b) an adverb of manner.

Key: 1b, 2a, 3b, 4b, 5b