

Adverbs are **words** that **describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs**. **Adverbs** often answer the questions **when? how? where?** and **to what extent?**

Examples:

Tomorrow, I will finish my work.

The adverb **tomorrow** answers the question “**When** will I finish my work?”

My colleague will carefully analyze the data.

The adverb **carefully** answers the question “**How** will my colleague analyze the data?”

The audience was very quiet during the performance.

The adverb **very** answers the question “**How** quiet was the audience during the performance?”

The table should be moved here.

The adverb **here** answers the question “**Where** should the table be moved?”

We often forget to water the plants.

The adverb **often** answers the question “**To what extent** do we forget to water the plants?”

Although the **-ly ending** usually signifies an **adverb**, the **adverbs** with the **-ly** ending should not be confused with **adjectives** also ending in **-ly**.

Here are some **examples of adjectives ending in -ly** that are **not** adverbs:

costly
worldly

orderly
lively

timely
lonely

motherly
friendly

Position of Adverbs and Adverbial Phrases

There is a certain **order of placement** that adverbs of **time, manner, location** and **direction** are placed in a sentence.

Adverbs of time are usually placed at (a) the **beginning** of the sentence or (b) the **end** of the sentence when the **adverb of time** is **last** in a series of adverbs.

Examples:

a) Yesterday, I walked.

b) I walked **home slowly yesterday**.

Adverbs of manner are usually placed (a) **after the verb**, (b) **after the adverb of direction**, or (c) **before the adverbial phrase of location**.

Examples:

a) I walked slowly.

b) I walked **home slowly**.

c) I walked slowly **in the park**.

Adverbs or adverbial phrases of direction and location are usually placed **after the verb**.

Examples:

I walked home. (adverb of direction)

I walked in the park. (adverbial phrase of location)

Adverbs modify not only **verbs**, but also **adjectives** and other **adverbs**.

Examples:

I walked at an extremely slow pace.

The adverb **extremely** modifies the adjective **slow**.

I walked extremely slowly.

The adverb *extremely* modifies the adverb *slowly*.

Additional Examples of Adverbs

roughly
fast
typically
sometimes

too
seldom
usually
consistently

now
later
never
always

rather
enough
only
soon

happily
decisively
well
still

Conjunctive Adverbs or Transitional Expressions

Even though **conjunctive adverbs** are classified as **adverbs**, they are more closely related to **co-ordinate conjunctions**. Like co-ordinate conjunctions, **conjunctive adverbs** connect **independent clauses of equal grammatical value** to show a **transition** from one thought to another.

Semicolons are used **before conjunctive adverbs** that connect **independent clauses**. See the handouts on comma and semicolon use.

The following sentence contains a **conjunctive adverb**:

The program was developed for the students; however, it was not approved by the committee.