

Clarification paper

Adverbs – types, formation, comparison

I. Types of adverbs

II. Formation of adverbs

III. Comparison of adverbs

I. Types of adverbs

Types of adverbs	Examples
manner	well, badly, accurately, quickly
place	here, there, in the laboratory
time	now, yesterday, in 2000
indefinite frequency	often, seldom, usually
definite frequency	monthly, never, once a year
degree/extent	slightly, considerably, totally
probability	possibly, probably, certainly
attitude/opinion	naturally, surprisingly, in my opinion
aspect	technically, politically, scientifically

For adverbs used as sentence linkers see Guidelines for Academic Writing: Text structure.

II. Formation of adverbs

	Endings	Examples	
Adjective +	-ly	quick > quickly, accurate > accurately, social > socially	
	-le > -ly	simple > simply, ample > amply	but: whole > wholly
	-y > -ily	easy > easily, busy > busily	but: dry > dryly/drily
	-ic > -ically	basic > basically, economic > economically	but: public > publicly
	-ical > -ically	typical > typically, economical > economically	
	-ful > fully	useful > usefully, helpful > helpfully	but: full > fully

Notes:

- Adjective : good

His English is good.

Adverb: well

He speaks English well.

- Some adverbs have the same form as adjectives, e.g. early, fast, likely, straight.

Adjective

*He is an **early** riser.*

*He is a **fast** driver.*

*What do you think is the most **likely** cause of the problem?*

*Draw a **straight** line.*

Adverb

*He gets up **early**.*

*He likes to drive **fast**.*

*If I was in your place, I'd very **likely** do the same thing.*

*The pen is on the desk **straight** in front of you.*

- Some adverbs have two forms – **one the same as the adjective, the other ending in –ly.**

a) Some of these adverbs have **the same or a similar meaning, e.g.**

direct/directly, loud/loudly, wrong/wrongly.

Adjective

*He spoke in a **loud** voice.*

*They have **direct** access to the data file.*

*His assumption is **wrong**.*

Adverb

*Don't speak so **loud**.*

*He spoke **louder/more loudly** than necessary.*

*They can access the data file **direct/directly**.*

*You've spelled my name **wrong/wrongly**.*

*But: Something has gone **wrong** with that machine. (not: wrongly)*

Non-native speakers are recommended to check with a good dictionary which of the two forms is more common/appropriate in the given context. Some forms (e.g. slow – go slow) are not suitable in formal English.

b) The following adverbs have **two forms with different meanings:**

free: *You can get the book free if you win the competition. (zdarma)*

freely: *You can move freely throughout the whole building. (volně)*

hard: *He works **hard**. (pilně, těžce)*

hardly: *I can **hardly** believe that. (sotva, stěží)*

high: *They live **high** up in the mountains. (vysoko)*

highly: *He is a **highly** educated man. (vysoce, velmi)*

late: *I have to work **late** tonight. (pozdě)*

lately: *I haven't seen him **lately**. (poslední dobou)*

near: *He lives quite **near**. (blízko)*

nearly : *The project is **nearly** finished. (téměř, skoro)*

wide: *The window was **wide** open. (dokořán; zcela)*

widely: *The opinions of these two research teams differ **widely**. (velmi, značně)*

- Some words in –ly are **adjectives**, not adverbs, e.g. **friendly, lively, silly**.

Adverbs have the form of a phrase: **in a –ly way/manner**.

*All our explorative drilling is done in an **environmentally-friendly way/manner**.*

- The verbs **seem, sound, look, feel, smell, taste** are usually **followed by an adjective**,