

Adverb

An Adverb is a word that adds more information about a **Verb** (action), an **Adjective** (quality), or even another **Adverb** (its own kind).

It doesn't just exist. It answers the crucial questions: **HOW, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, HOW OFTEN, or TO WHAT EXTENT** something is done.

1 Adverbs Modifying a Verb

Show **how, when, where, or to what extent** an action happens.

"The driver stopped the train suddenly."

→ "suddenly" tells us **how** the driver stopped.

2. Adverbs Modifying an Adjective

Add intensity, degree, or emphasis to an adjective.

Example:

"The book is very interesting."

→ "very" increases the intensity of the adjective "interesting."

3. Adverbs Modifying Another Adverb

Usually used to **intensify or qualify** another adverb.

Example:

"He drives too carelessly."

→ "carelessly" modifies the verb "drives."

→ "too" modifies the adverb "carelessly," showing **excessive degree**.

Note: Forget just looking for words ending in -ly. That's a rookie move. To find an adverb, Ask the sentence the right questions:

- **How?** (*slowly, beautifully, suddenly*)
- **When?** (*yesterday, now, then*)
- **Where?** (*here, there, everywhere*)
- **How often?** (*always, sometimes, never*)
- **To what extent?** (*very, too, quite, almost*)

How to Spot an Adverb

You need to identify **who** the word is working for. Is it describing a noun/pronoun, or is it adding detail to an action, a quality, or another detail?

Types of Adverb

These three types of adverbs almost always appear at the **end of a clause**, after the verb and any objects. Their order is sacred, but first, let's get to know them individually.

1. Adverb of Manner (How?)

Definition: Tells *how* an action is performed (method/way). Often ends in **-ly** (bravely, carefully, badly).

Examples:

1. He fought **bravely**.
2. The team played **badly**.

Verb → Object → Adverb

She drove the car carefully.

She drove carefully the car. (X)

Error Alert: Hindi influence often causes wrong order ("*carefully the car*"). Always put adverb **after the object**.

2. Adverb of Place (Where?)

Tells **where** the action happened. And usually comes after the verb or object.

Examples:

1. The children are playing **outside**.
2. Please come **here**.
3. They went **downtown**.
4. He will meet you **there**.

3. Adverb of Time (When?)

Tells *when* the action happened. Usually comes at the end of a sentence. Sometimes it can come at the beginning for emphasis.

Examples:

1. We will discuss it **tomorrow**.
2. She arrived **late**.
3. Standard: *I will call you later*.
4. Emphatic: *Later, I will call you*.

The MPT Rule (Manner → Place → Time)

We use this because we have to show most specific verb detail to broadest time context. If only two are present still follow the MPT rule and skip the missing part.

Order of multiple adverbs:

1. **Manner** → immediate detail (*how*)
2. **Place** → setting (*where*)
3. **Time** → general frame (*when*)

Examples

1. She sang last night (T) at the concert (P) beautifully (M). (X)
She sang beautifully (M) at the concert (P) last night (T).
2. He worked in the garage (P) diligently (M) all day (T). (X)
He worked diligently (M) in the garage (P) all day (T). (Correct)
3. He spoke politely (M) yesterday (T).
4. She danced gracefully (M) on the stage (P).

4. Adverb of Frequency

An Adverb of Frequency answers the question: **HOW OFTEN?**

always, often, usually, sometimes, seldom, rarely, never, ever.

The Golden Rule of Placement

The rule is simple but crucial. The Adverb of Frequency sits: **BEFORE the main verb. AFTER the helping verb** (if one is present).

Example

1. He comes always late. (A classic error)
He always comes late.

2. She never has seen a ghost.(X)
She has never seen a ghost.
3. You should always check your answers before submitting the test. You
4. They often visit their granpas on the weekends.
5. We can seldom afford to take an expensive vacation.
6. They have always been interested in history.

The Special Case: The Verb 'to be' (is, am, are, was, were)

The verb 'to be' is a VIP. It considers itself too important to have an adverb come before it. So, when 'to be' is the **main verb** of the sentence, the Adverb of Frequency comes after it .

Example

1. **Incorrect:** He always is happy.
He is always happy.
2. She is never late for class.
3. My brother is often tired after work.
4. The teacher usually kind to students.

The '-ly' Deception (The Imposters)

The rule of thumb is that Adjective + ly = Adverb. For example, beautiful + ly = beautifully. But there's another, less-known rule that creates these imposters:

Noun + ly = Adjective

When you add -ly to a noun, you don't get an adverb. You get an **adjective**. These words describe nouns, not actions.

The Most Wanted List of Imposters

Here are the most common -ly words that are **ADJECTIVES**, not adverbs. Memorize this list. It's your shield against confusion.

1. **Cowardly:** a cowardly person
2. **Miserly:** a miserly attitude
3. **Niggardly:** a niggardly donation (means stingy)
4. **Scholarly:** a scholarly article
5. **Friendly:** a friendly gesture

6. **Fatherly / Motherly / Brotherly**
7. **Manly / Womanly:** a manly voice
8. **Costly:** a costly mistake
9. **Orderly:** an orderly queue
10. **Deadly:** a deadly poison
11. **Lovely:** a lovely day
12. **Timely** – done at the right time
13. **Lively** – full of energy and excitement
14. **Holy** – sacred or religious
15. **Silly** – foolish
16. **Ugly** – unpleasant to look at
17. **Heavenly** – delightful; like heaven
18. **Elderly** – old or aged
19. **Homely** – simple and cozy (BrE: plain in appearance)
20. **Saintly** – very good or virtuous

Examples:

1. The soldier fought cowardly.(X)
The soldier fought in a cowardly manner.
He fought like a coward.
2. He behaved miserly.(X)
He behaved in a miserly way.
He behaved like a miser.(X)
3. She smiled friendly. (X)
She smiled in a friendly fashion.
She smiled with friendliness.
4. They worked orderly. (X)
They worked in an orderly manner.
They worked with order.
5. The teacher spoke scholarly. (X)
The teacher spoke in a scholarly manner.
The teacher spoke like a scholar.
6. He lived costly. (X)
He lived in a costly way.
He lived with extravagance.
7. She looked lovely at him. (X)
She looked at him in a lovely way.
She looked at him with affection.

8. He acted fatherly toward the students. (X)
He acted in a fatherly fashion.
He acted with fatherly care.
9. The animal attacked deadly. (X)
The animal attacked in a deadly manner.
The animal attacked like a killer.
10. She helped neighborly. (X)
She helped in a neighborly way.
She helped with kindness.

Inversion

First, what is a normal sentence structure? It's:

Subject + Verb (e.g., He goes.)

Inversion is the technique of flipping this normal order to:

Verb + Subject (e.g., Does he go?)

inversion in statements, is triggered by placing certain adverbs or adverbial phrases at the very **beginning of a sentence**.

The Trigger (Negative Adverbs at the Start)

The most common trigger for inversion is a **negative or restrictive adverb** placed at the beginning of a clause for emphasis. When you drag one of these adverbs to the front, it demands a price: the subject and verb must invert.

Examples:

1. He had hardly left the house when it started to rain.
Hardly had he left the house when it started to rain.
2. He had no sooner finished his meal than the phone rang.
No sooner had he finished his meal than the phone rang.
3. He seldom visits his old friends.
Seldom does he visit his old friends.
4. I little knew what was about to happen.
Little did I know what was about to happen.

5. I had scarcely fallen asleep when the alarm went off.

Scarcely had I fallen asleep when the alarm went off.

6. We had barely arrived at the concert when the main act started.

Barely had we arrived at the concert when the main act started.

7. The city rarely experiences snow in May.

Rarely does the city experience snow in May.

8. I have never heard such a ridiculous excuse.

Never have I heard such a ridiculous excuse.

9. He not only lost his keys but also missed his train.

Not only did he lose his keys, but he also missed his train.

10. You are under no circumstances to open that door.

Under no circumstances are you to open that door.

11. **Only after / Only when / Only if**

We realized the danger only after the police arrived.

Only after the police arrived did we realize the danger.

Only when the sun sets can you see the satellite.

Only if you study hard will you pass the exam.

The Placement of Only and Even (The Misplaced Modifiers)

The adverbs only and even are like spotlights. They are supposed to shine on a specific word to highlight it. If you put the spotlight in the wrong place, you highlight the wrong actor, and the whole meaning of the play changes.

Only and even should be placed directly before the word or phrase they are intended to modify. Let's see how moving only can drastically change a sentence's meaning.

Consider the sentence: "**She told him that she loved him.**"

1. Only she told him that she loved him.

- **Meaning:** No one else told him. She was the sole person to tell him. (Only modifies she).

2. She only told him that she loved him.

- **Meaning:** She did nothing else but tell him. She didn't write it, show it, or hint at it. She just **told** him. (Only modifies told).

3. She told only him that she loved him.

- **Meaning:** She told him and no one else. He was the sole recipient of the information. (Only modifies him).

4. She told him that only she loved him.

- **Meaning:** No one else loved him. She was his only lover. (Only modifies she in the second clause).

5. She told him that she loved only him.

- **Meaning:** She loved him and no one else. Her love was exclusive to him. (Only modifies him in the second clause).

See the chaos? The same words, but five different meanings, all because of the placement of only.

Common Exam Error

In exams, only is often misplaced, leading to a logical absurdity.

- **Incorrect:** He only eats strawberries for dinner.
- **Logical Meaning:** The only action he performs is eating. He doesn't sleep, work, or breathe. He just eats. (This is illogical).
- **Intended Meaning:** The only thing he eats for dinner is strawberries.
- **Correct:** He eats only strawberries for dinner. (Or: For dinner, he eats only strawberries.)

Too Much vs. Much Too

This is a subtle but important distinction. Both express an excess of something, but they modify different parts of speech.

Too Much

Use too much **before a Noun**. It means an excessive amount of something.

1. There is **too much** sugar in my tea.
2. He talks **too much**. (Here much is used as a pronoun/adverb, but the phrase still refers to an excessive quantity of talking).

Much Too

Use much too **before an Adjective or an Adverb**. It means "excessively." The much is there to intensify the too.

1. This tea is **much too sweet**. (adjective).
This tea is too much sweet.(X)
2. He drives **much too fast**. (fast is an adverb).
He drives too much fast. (X)

Simple Memory Trick: Much hangs out with **Nouns**. Too hangs out with **Adjectives**. In much too, the much is just there to boost too.

Verbs That Hate "As" (The Unwanted Partner)

Certain verbs, in their active voice, should not be followed by the word "as" when they are used to describe a role or identity. This is a common superfluity error.

1. **Appoint:** They appointed him as the captain. -> They appointed him the captain.
2. **Elect:** She was elected as the president. -> She was elected the president.
3. **Consider:** I consider him as my brother. -> I consider him my brother.
4. **Call:** People call him as a genius. -> People call him a genius.

5. **Name:** They named the baby as Rahul. -> They named the baby Rahul.
6. **Think:** I think of him as a fool. (Here as is okay because of of, but I think him as a fool is wrong).
The Exception: Verbs like **Regard, Describe, Define, and Treat, DO** take as.
 1. **Regard:** The board **regards** the new proposal **as** a major turning point for the company.
 2. **Describe:** Critics often **describe** his latest novel **as** a modern masterpiece.
 3. **Define:** In the contract, the term "Net Profit" is **defined as** total revenue minus all operating costs.
 4. **Treat:** We always **treat** our customers **as** members of our extended family.
 5. **Know (Passive Voice):** The small coastal town **is known as** one of the best surfing spots in the region.
 6. Chameleon is **known as** the master of camouflage.

Chameleon Words Examples

1. **Fast**
 - a) **Fast (Adjective):** He is a fast runner. (Describes the noun 'runner'.)
 - b) **Fast (Adverb):** He runs fast. (Modifies the verb 'runs'.)
 - c) **Fast (Verb):** We will fast for a day. (The act of abstaining from food.)
 - d) **Fast (Noun):** They broke their religious fast. (The period of abstaining from food.)
2. **Hard**
 - a) **Hard (Adjective):** The exam was hard. (Describes the quality of the noun 'exam'.)
 - b) **Hard (Adverb):** She works hard. (Describes the manner of the verb 'works'.)

3. Late

- a) **Late (Adjective):** The train was late. (Describes the state of the noun 'train'.)
- b) **Late (Adverb):** He arrived late. (Describes the time of the verb 'arrived'.)
- c) **Late (Adjective):** Her late grandfather. (Describes the noun 'grandfather', meaning 'deceased'.)

4. Like

- a) **Like (Verb):** I like your idea. (The action of finding something pleasing.)
- b) **Like (Preposition):** He looks like his uncle. (Shows comparison or relationship between nouns.)
- c) **Like (Adverb):** The children acted like adults. (Modifies the verb 'acted' in terms of manner.)

5. Near

- a) **Near (Preposition):** Our house is near the park. (Establishes a spatial relationship.)
- b) **Near (Adjective):** The accident was a near miss. (Describes the noun 'miss'.)
- c) **Near (Adverb):** Don't come too near. (Modifies the verb 'come'.)
- d) **Near (Verb):** We began to near the deadline. (The action of approaching.)

6. Right

- a) **Right (Adjective):** Give the right answer. (Describes the noun 'answer'.)
- b) **Right (Adverb):** Go right after the signal. (Modifies the verb 'Go', meaning 'immediately'.)
- c) **Right (Noun):** It is her civil right. (The name for an entitlement or privilege.)
- d) **Right (Verb):** Please right the inverted boat. (The action of setting something upright.)

7. Well

- a) **Well (Adverb):** He performed well on stage. (Describes the manner of the verb 'performed'.)
- b) **Well (Adjective):** I am well, thank you. (Describes a state of health, an exception.)
- c) **Well (Noun):** The villagers drew water from the well. (The name of a source of water.)
- d) **Well (Interjection):** Well, I suppose you are correct. (Expresses surprise or hesitation.)

8. Down

- a) **Down (Adverb):** Please sit down.
- b) **Down (Preposition):** He walked down the street.
- c) **Down (Verb):** She quickly downed her drink.
- d) **Down (Adjective):** He felt down after the news.

9. Light

- a) **Light (Noun):** Turn on the light.
- b) **Light (Adjective):** The box was very light.
- c) **Light (Verb):** Please light the candles.
- d) **Light (Adverb):** He treads light on his feet.

10. Flat

- a) **Flat (Adjective):** The road was flat.
- b) **Flat (Adverb):** He lay flat on his back.
- c) **Flat (Noun):** They live in a small flat.
- d) **Flat (Verb):** The wind flattened his hair.

11. Calm

- a) **Calm (Adjective):** The sea was calm.
- b) **Calm (Verb):** Please calm yourself.
- c) **Calm (Noun):** A sense of calm descended.
- d) **Calm (Adverb):** She spoke calmly.

12. Close

- a) **Close (Adjective):** They are close friends.
- b) **Close (Verb):** Please close the door.
- c) **Close (Adverb):** Don't stand too close.

- d) **Close (Noun):** The competition came to a close.

13. Fair

- a) **Fair (Adjective):** She has fair skin. / That's a fair decision.
b) **Fair (Adverb):** Play fair.
c) **Fair (Noun):** We went to the county fair.

14. Fine

- a) **Fine (Adjective):** I feel fine. / That's a fine piece of art.
b) **Fine (Adverb):** She writes fine.
c) **Fine (Noun):** He had to pay a fine.
d) **Fine (Verb):** The police fined him for speeding.

15. Cool

- a) **Cool (Adjective):** It's a cool day.
b) **Cool (Verb):** Let the soup cool.
c) **Cool (Noun):** Take a dip in the cool of the evening.

16. Open

- a) **Open (Adjective):** The door is open.
b) **Open (Verb):** Please open the door.
c) **Open (Noun):** The golf tournament is an open.
d) **Open (Adverb):** He left the window open.

17. Clean

- a) **Clean (Adjective):** The room is clean.
b) **Clean (Verb):** Please clean your room.
c) **Clean (Adverb):** He shot clean through the target.

18. Empty

- a) **Empty (Adjective):** The box is empty.
b) **Empty (Verb):** Please empty the box.
c) **Empty (Noun):** The empties were collected for recycling.

19. Back

- a) **Back (Noun):** My back aches.
b) **Back (Adverb):** Go back home.
c) **Back (Verb):** He decided to back the project.
d) **Back (Adjective):** The back door was open.

20. Sound

- a) **Sound (Noun):** I heard a strange sound.
b) **Sound (Verb):** That sounds good.
c) **Sound (Adjective):** He is a sound sleeper.