

Adverbs

Adverbs describe or indicate degree. They answer the questions *how? why? when? where? how much? or to what degree?* To determine whether to use an adverb or an adjective, locate the word it describes. Adverbs describe action verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.

Rule #1:

Many adverbs are formed by adding *-ly* to an adjective. Sometimes the spelling changes when the *-ly* is added. When an adjective ends in *-ly*, it usually has no adverb form. To use the word as an adverb, use the adjective in an adverb phrase.

Examples of Rule #1:

beautiful – beautifully
easy – easily
He responded to the crowd in a friendly manner.

Rule #2:

When an adjective ends in *-ic*, form an adverb by adding *-ally* (except the word *public*, whose adverb form is *publicly*).

Examples of Rule #2:

athletic – athletically pathetic – pathetically

Rule #3:

For clarity, place an adverb close to the word it describes.

Examples of Rule #3:

I almost had to work the entire weekend. (I didn't have to work.)
I had to work almost the entire weekend. (I worked, but not the entire weekend.)

Rule #4:

With a one-syllable adverb and some two-syllable adverbs, add *-er* for comparisons between two items and *-est* for comparisons among more than two items. NOTE: If the adverb ends in *-y*, change the *-y* to *-i* before you add the ending.

Examples of Rule #4:

fast faster fastest
happy happier happiest

Rule #5:

With some two-syllable adverbs and all three- and four-syllable adverbs, DO NOT use the -er or -est endings. Instead, put the word more/most or less/least before the adverb when you use it in a comparison. If an -er or -est ending can be used with a two-syllable adverb, the dictionary will list these endings.

Examples of Rule #5:

suddenly more suddenly most suddenly
rapidly less rapidly least rapidly

Rule #6:

DO NOT split an infinitive (a phrase beginning with the word to) with an adverb. Place the adverb after the infinitive.

Examples of Rule #6:

Correct: You need to review the assignment carefully.

Incorrect: You need to carefully review the assignment.

Rule #7:

Some words can be both adjectives and adverbs, depending upon how they are used. The word well, for example, is an adverb when it describes an action verb, but it can also be an adjective when it refers to health.

Examples of Rule #7:

Pam manages the department well. (Well is an adverb telling how she manages.)

Although he recently had surgery, Mario looks well. (Well is an adjective used with the linking verb looks.)