

Chapter 6

Adverbs

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PRETEST Identifying Adverbs

Write each adverb and the word it modifies. Then write whether the modified word is a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

1. Susan B. Anthony fought tirelessly for women's voting rights.
2. The women often suffered defeats, but they continued their campaign.
3. In 1919 the Nineteenth Amendment finally gave women the vote.
4. Are women always treated fairly today?
5. We arrived really early for the concert.
6. The kittens were extremely tiny, and we handled them quite gently.
7. I completely admire gymnasts' amazingly complex performances.
8. Have you ever seen that movie anywhere?
9. Beth's handwriting is somewhat sloppy, but she expresses her ideas very well.
10. Do you play soccer here?

PRETEST Comparative and Superlative Adverbs

Write the correct word or phrase from the choices in parentheses.

11. Dad thinks (better, best) of all in peace and quiet.
12. Cars on the German autobahn travel (faster, more faster, fastest, most fastest) than vehicles on American highways.
13. Some students work (more independently, most independently) than others.
14. Of all my students, Sherman works (harder, hardest).
15. You play this game even (worse, worser, worst) than I.
16. Of the six families, which traveled (farther, more farther, farthest, most farthest) to the reunion?
17. Which of these two computer games do you like (better, best)?
18. Who practices (more frequently, most frequently)—Trisha, Moishi, or Teodoro?
19. Does André serve (more rapidly, most rapidly) than Pete?
20. Which of the three babies cries (less, least)?

PRETEST Using Adjectives and Adverbs

Write the correct word from the choices in parentheses.

21. Spiders cause (real, really) fear in some people.
22. I (most, almost) never take a walk after nine o'clock in the evening.
23. Jamaica is a (real, really) good artist.
24. After that enormous dinner, I don't feel (good, well).
25. Your brother (sure, surely) knows a great deal about computers.
26. The volleyball player with the sprained wrist played (bad, badly).

27. I felt (bad, badly) about the loss.
28. (Most, Almost) visitors to the zoo move (slow, slowly) through the exhibits.
29. A surgeon needs keen eyes and (sure, surely) hands.
30. You look (good, well) in that new hairstyle.

PRETEST Correcting Double Negatives

Rewrite each sentence so it correctly expresses a negative idea.

31. Because of a Siberian tiger's colored stripes, you can't scarcely see it in the autumn.
32. Don't never ask me about that mistake again.
33. I wouldn't hardly call a crocodile a good pet!
34. Edwin Land wouldn't never have invented the Polaroid camera without a question from his daughter.
35. Can't I say nothing about the missing suitcase of money?
36. Without luck I couldn't never have caught that line drive.
37. In Red Bird's fifteen years, he hadn't gone nowhere outside the reservation.
38. Doesn't nobody here know about humans' eight wrist bones?
39. The train wreck wasn't no accident.
40. I haven't no homework tonight.

6.1 ADVERBS THAT MODIFY VERBS

Adjectives are words that modify nouns and pronouns. Adverbs are another type of modifier. They modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

An adverb is a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

WHAT ADVERBS MODIFY

VERBS	People <i>handle</i> old violins carefully .
ADJECTIVES	Very <i>old</i> violins are valuable.
ADVERBS	Orchestras almost <i>always</i> include violins.

An adverb may tell *how* or *in what manner* an action is done. It may tell *when* or *how often* an action is done. It may also tell *where* or *in what direction* an action is done.

WAYS ADVERBS MODIFY VERBS

ADVERBS TELL	EXAMPLES
HOW	grandly, easily, completely, neatly, gratefully, sadly
WHEN	soon, now, immediately, often, never, usually, early
WHERE	here, there, everywhere, inside, downstairs, above, far

When an adverb modifies an adjective or another adverb, the adverb usually comes before the word it modifies. When an adverb modifies a verb, the adverb can sometimes occupy different positions in a sentence.

POSITION OF ADVERBS MODIFYING VERBS

BEFORE THE VERB	Guests often dine at the White House.
AFTER THE VERB	Guests dine often at the White House.
AT THE BEGINNING	often guests dine at the White House.
AT THE END	Guests dine at the White House often .

Many adverbs are formed by adding *-ly* to adjectives. However, not all words that end in *-ly* are adverbs. The words *friendly*, *lively*, *kindly*, *lovely*, and *lonely* are usually adjectives. On the other hand, not all adverbs end in *-ly*.

SOME ADVERBS NOT ENDING IN *-LY*

afterward	everywhere	near	short
already	fast	never	sometimes
always	forever	not	somewhere
anywhere	hard	now	soon
away	here	nowhere	straight
below	home	often	then
even	late	outside	there
ever	long	seldom	well

PRACTICE Identifying Adverbs I

Write each adverb. Beside the adverb, write the verb it modifies.

1. Cinderella whisked her broom quickly across the floor.
2. She sighed heavily and stepped outside.
3. Cinderella wished desperately for an invitation to the ball.
4. Her mean stepsisters were already dressing for the event.
5. At the ball, Cinderella danced gracefully with the prince.
6. She left the ball late and arrived home without one of her glass slippers.
7. The prince searched eagerly for the owner of the slipper.
8. Cinderella and the prince lived happily for the rest of their days.
9. The newlyweds traveled everywhere throughout the kingdom.
10. The happy couple seldom invited the mean stepsisters for a visit.

6.2 ADVERBS THAT MODIFY ADJECTIVES AND OTHER ADVERBS

Adverbs are often used to modify adjectives and other adverbs. Notice how adverbs affect the meaning of the adjectives in the following sentences. Most often they tell *how* or *to what extent*.

EXAMPLE Harry Truman used **extremely** direct language.

EXAMPLE He became a **very** popular president.

In the first sentence, the adverb *extremely* modifies the adjective *direct*. *Extremely* tells to what extent Truman's language was direct. In the second sentence, the adverb *very* modifies the adjective *popular*. *Very* tells to what extent Truman was popular.

In the following sentences, adverbs modify other adverbs.

EXAMPLE Truman entered politics **unusually** late in life.

EXAMPLE He moved through the political ranks **quite** quickly.

In the first sentence, the adverb *unusually* modifies the adverb *late*. *Unusually* tells how late Truman entered politics. In the second sentence, the adverb *quite* modifies the adverb *quickly*. *Quite* tells how quickly Truman moved through the ranks.

When an adverb modifies an adjective or another adverb, the adverb almost always comes directly before the word it modifies. On the following page is a list of some adverbs that are often used to modify adjectives and other adverbs.

ADVERBS OFTEN USED TO MODIFY ADJECTIVES AND OTHER ADVERBS

almost	just	rather	too
barely	nearly	really	totally
extremely	partly	so	unusually
hardly	quite	somewhat	very

PRACTICE Identifying Adverbs II

Write each adverb and the word it modifies. Then write whether the modified word is a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

1. Anita almost never misses a foul shot.
2. Jason told a very silly joke.
3. That movie was just wonderful!
4. These coins are extremely rare and unusually valuable.
5. My parents nearly always vote on election day.
6. Norma Jean is really shy, but she is quite popular.
7. Harrison ate too fast and felt rather sick.
8. Tessa stacked the dishes somewhat carelessly in the sink.
9. Fred and Ginger glide so smoothly around the dance floor.
10. I have barely enough money for one hamburger, and I am totally hungry!

6.3 COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE ADVERBS

The **comparative form** of an adverb compares one action with another.

The **superlative form** of an adverb compares one action with several others.

Most short adverbs add *-er* to form the comparative and *-est* to form the superlative.

COMPARING ADVERBS WITH <i>-ER</i> AND <i>-EST</i>	
COMPARATIVE	The pianist arrived earlier than the violinist.
SUPERLATIVE	The drummer arrived earliest of all the players.

Long adverbs and a few short ones require the use of *more* or *most*.

COMPARING ADVERBS WITH <i>MORE</i> AND <i>MOST</i>	
COMPARATIVE	The violinist plays more often than the harpist.
SUPERLATIVE	Which musicians play most often ?

Some adverbs have irregular comparative and superlative forms.

IRREGULAR COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE FORMS		
BASE FORM	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
well	better	best
badly	worse	worst
little	less	least
far (distance)	farther	farthest
far (degree)	further	furthest

The words *less* and *least* are used before adverbs to form the negative comparative and superlative.

EXAMPLES I play **less well**. I play **least accurately**.

Don't use *more*, *most*, *less*, or *least* before adverbs that already end in *-er* or *-est*.

PRACTICE Using Comparative and Superlative Adverbs

Write the correct word or phrase from the choices in parentheses.

1. George finished his work (later, more later) than Stanley.
2. Of all the students, Bonita completed the assignment (more, most) successfully.
3. Which of these two books did you like (better, best)?
4. Eleanor draws (worse, worst) than Elizabeth.
5. Who walks (farther, farthest) to school—Jackson, Emerson, or Theo?
6. Which of the fifteen team members swims (faster, more faster, fastest, most fastest)?
7. Mr. Roberts works (less, least) energetically than his son.
8. Which of your six cousins do you see (more often, more oftener, most often, most oftenest)?
9. Of the three pianists, which one plays (better, best)?
10. Jan does her chores (more, most) cheerfully than her sister.

6.4 USING ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS

Sometimes it's hard to decide whether a sentence needs an adjective or an adverb. Think carefully about how the word is used.

EXAMPLE He was (**careful, carefully**) with the antique clock.

EXAMPLE He worked (**careful, carefully**) on the antique clock.

In the first sentence, the missing word follows a linking verb and modifies the subject, *He*. Therefore, an adjective is needed. *Careful* is the correct choice. In the second sentence, the missing word modifies the verb, *worked*. Thus, an adverb is needed, and *carefully* is the correct choice.

The words *good* and *well* and the words *bad* and *badly* are sometimes confused. *Good* and *bad* are adjectives. Use them before nouns and after linking verbs. *Well* and *badly* are adverbs. Use them to modify verbs. *Well* may also be used as an adjective to mean “healthy”: *You look well today.*

TELLING ADJECTIVES FROM ADVERBS

ADJECTIVE

The band sounds **good**.

The band sounds **bad**.

The soloist is **well**.

ADVERB

The band plays **well**.

The band plays **badly**.

The soloist sings **well**.

Use these modifiers correctly: *real* and *really*, *sure* and *surely*, *most* and *almost*. *Real* and *sure* are adjectives. *Really*, *surely*, and *almost* are adverbs. *Most* can be an adjective or an adverb.

TELLING ADJECTIVES FROM ADVERBS

ADJECTIVE

Music is a **real** art.

A pianist needs **sure** hands.

Most pianos have eighty-eight keys.

ADVERB

This music is **really** popular.

Piano music is **surely** popular.

Piano strings **almost** never break.

PRACTICE Using Adjectives and Adverbs

Write the correct word from the choices in parentheses.

1. Proceed (immediate, immediately) to the exit.
2. Stan (most, almost) always takes the garbage out.

3. That chicken sandwich tasted (bad, badly).
4. Those colors look (good, well) on you.
5. Mr. and Mrs. Kim have a (sure, surely) chance for a trophy.
6. Jolene has a (real, really) good sense of humor.
7. Dalila has a (real, really) talent for mathematics.
8. You are (sure, surely) right about that!
9. My little brother reads very (good, well) for his age.
10. The team played (bad, badly) in the first half.

6.5 CORRECTING DOUBLE NEGATIVES

The adverb *not* is a **negative word**, expressing the idea of “no.” *Not* often appears in a short form as part of a contraction. When *not* is part of a contraction, as in the words in the chart below, *n’t* is an adverb.

CONTRACTIONS WITH <i>NOT</i>		
are not = aren’t	does not = doesn’t	should not = shouldn’t
cannot = can’t	had not = hadn’t	was not = wasn’t
could not = couldn’t	has not = hasn’t	were not = weren’t
did not = didn’t	have not = haven’t	will not = won’t
do not = don’t	is not = isn’t	would not = wouldn’t

In all but two of these words, the apostrophe replaces the *o* in *not*. In *can’t* both an *n* and the *o* are omitted. *Will not* becomes *won’t*.

Other negative words are listed in the following chart. Each negative word has several opposites. These are **affirmative words**, or words that show the idea of “yes.”

SOME NEGATIVE AND AFFIRMATIVE WORDS

NEGATIVE	AFFIRMATIVE
never, scarcely, hardly, barely	always, ever
nobody	anybody, everybody, somebody
no, none	all, any, one, some
no one	anyone, everyone, one, someone
nothing	anything, something
nowhere	anywhere, somewhere

Don't use two negative words to express the same idea. This is called a **double negative**. Only one negative word is necessary to express a negative idea. You can correct a double negative by removing one of the negative words or by replacing one of the negative words with an affirmative word.

EXAMPLE INCORRECT I **don't** have **no** homework.

EXAMPLE CORRECT I have **no** homework.

EXAMPLE CORRECT I **don't** have **any** homework.

PRACTICE Expressing Negative Ideas

Rewrite each sentence so it correctly expresses a negative idea.

1. George Washington wouldn't never tell a lie.
2. Wasn't nobody in the auditorium?
3. There isn't a better school nowhere than this one.
4. Mr. Perez couldn't find nothing wrong with the electrical system.
5. None of this stuff doesn't belong in the living room.

6. We can't tell you nothing about the surprise.
7. No one doesn't never go to the wrestling matches.
8. There weren't no eggs in the refrigerator.
9. Didn't you never see a real circus before?
10. I haven't no money for lunch.

PRACTICE Proofreading

Rewrite the following passage, correcting errors in spelling, grammar, and usage. Write legibly to be sure one letter is not mistaken for another. There are ten errors.

Langston Hughes

¹Langston Hughes was real popular in his time. ²He wrote really good. ³Hughes's father moved to Mexico. ⁴Hughes was only one year old at the time. ⁵His mother didn't never go with him. ⁶She stayed behind in the United States, and Hughes lived with his grandmother in Kansas.

⁷At the age of five, Hughes went to a library with his mother. ⁸He fell deep in love with books. ⁹At Central High School in Cleveland, Ohio, he wrote poems and edited the school yearbook. ¹⁰He also ran more faster than many athletes in his class. ¹¹His school won a city championship in track.

¹²At the age of eighteen, Hughes wrote "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" on a train to Mexico. ¹³He crossed the Mississippi River and wrote the poem quick on the back of an envelope. ¹⁴Students most always read this poem by Hughes.

¹⁵Hughes included jazz and blues rhythms in his poetry more oftener than many other poets. ¹⁶With his poetry, novels, and plays, Hughes sure became one of the most important writers of his day.

POSTTEST Identifying Adverbs

Write each adverb and the word it modifies. Then write whether the modified word is a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

1. I occasionally read books about the Egyptian pyramids.
2. These enormous monuments rise grandly from the sands.
3. Outside they almost always look very simple.
4. In one horror movie, an Egyptian mummy came to life and extremely quickly terrified an entire city.
5. Sometimes nature accidentally produces a mummy.
6. Two hikers in the Alps found a partially frozen body.
7. Someone had died there between 3350 and 3300 B.C.
8. The baseball season will soon end.
9. Today will be partly sunny, but it will be too cold for a picnic.
10. A rather chilly wind blew quite fiercely through the trees.

POSTTEST Comparative and Superlative Adverbs

Write the correct word or phrase from the choices in parentheses.

11. Which of those two Disney movies did you like (better, best)?
12. I studied (less, least) for this test than for the last one.
13. Which of the five instruments measured the distance (more exactly, most exactly)?
14. This new modem connects me to the Internet (faster, more faster, fastest, most fastest) than the old one.
15. Hetty plays the violin (worse, worst) than anyone else in the orchestra.
16. I eat hot dogs (more frequently, most frequently) than hamburgers.
17. Of all the test-takers, Ashley left the room (later, latest).
18. My dog eats (more often, most often, more oftener, most oftenest) than my cat.

19. Which of the students in your class travels (farther, farthest) to school?
20. Of the six girls, which one arrived (earlier, earliest) for the interview?

POSTTEST Using Adjectives and Adverbs

Write the correct word from the choices in parentheses.

21. The crash between the car and the bicycle damaged the bicycle (bad, badly).
22. Corey (most, almost) always finishes his homework.
23. Are you (sure, surely) about that answer?
24. That fried chicken (sure, surely) smells (good, well).
25. Dionne finished her chores (quick, quickly).
26. How (good, well) do you swim half a mile?
27. Is that a (real, really) diamond?
28. (Most, Almost) children want a pet of some kind.
29. Do you feel (bad, badly) about the broken promise?
30. This new can opener works (real, really) (good, well).

POSTTEST Correcting Double Negatives

Rewrite each sentence so it correctly expresses a negative idea.

31. There isn't nothing wrong with Monica's brother.
32. Maddie hadn't barely touched her food.
33. We didn't never expect the movie's sad ending.
34. There wasn't no one in the room.
35. I hadn't no knowledge of Kwanza until African American culture week.
36. Wasn't nobody listening to the weather reports?
37. Kevin couldn't take nobody with him to the audition.
38. Akiba wouldn't hardly do a thing like that.
39. The stray dog wasn't nowhere near the trash cans.
40. People in the space program won't never forget the tragedy of the space shuttle *Challenger*.