

25

Adverbials

205 Summary

Introduction to adverbials • 206

An adverbial can be an adverb phrase, prepositional phrase or noun phrase.

*Luckily the money was **on my desk** when I arrived **this morning**.*

Adverb forms • 207

Many adverbs end in *ly*: *quietly, finally, certainly*. There are some pairs of adverbs like *hard and hardly* with different meanings.

The position of adverbials • 208

Some adverbials come next to the word or phrase they modify.

*those people **over there** **really** nice*

Some adverbials modify a verb or a whole clause. They come in front, mid or end position.

Front	Mid	End
<i>Today the train</i>	<i>actually left</i>	<i>on time.</i>

Types of adverbial

Adverbs of manner • 209

slowly, with a smile (how?)

Place and time • 210

here, at the post office (where?)

yesterday, next week (when?)

ages, for three weeks (how long?)

Adverbs of frequency • 211

often, every week (how often?)

Adverbs of degree • 212

very, a bit (how?)

Focus and viewpoint • 213

only, especially

medically, from a political point of view

Truth adverbs • 214

probably, on the whole

Comment adverbs • 215*luckily, to our amusement***Linking adverbs • 216***also, on the other hand*

NOTE

For phrasal verbs, e.g. *Switch the light off*, • 230.For means, e.g. *I cut it with a knife*, • 228(5).For function/role, e.g. *I use this room as my office*, • 228(6).For *where, when, why* and *how* in questions, • 27, and as relative adverbs, • 279.

206 Introduction to adverbials

In this real conversation Liz is telling a friend how she and Tony were stopped by the police.

STOPPED BY THE POLICE

Liz: *It was **at about eleven o'clock at night**, and **at that sort of time** the police are **always** looking for people who've been drinking. And I can remember **very well** that we were **in a hurry** to get **home** because Catherine was **with a babysitter**, but she wasn't **at home**, she was **in someone else's house**, and we wanted to get **back** before they were ready to go **to bed**. Do you remember?*

Tony: *We'd been **to the cinema**.*

Liz: *Mhm. And I can remember...*

Tony: *Hadn't had a drink **for days**.*

Liz: *No. I can remember distinctly that you were going **very very slowly** as you saw the police car **in front of you**, and **then** you said **in a very impatient fashion**, 'Oh, they're doing this **on purpose**. They're going **very slowly**. I will overtake them.' You overtook them, and **sure enough** they thought that that was worth stopping you for. So they did.*

Tony: *So they got **out**, and they inspected the car **thoroughly in a very officious manner**.*

(from M. Underwood and P. Barr *Listeners*)

1 An adverbial can have these forms.

Adverb phrase: *You were going **very slowly**.*
 *We wanted to get **back**.*

Prepositional phrase: *Catherine wasn't **at home**.*
 *You saw the police car **in front of you**.*

Noun phrase: *We wanted to get **home**.*
 *It happened **last week**.*

2 Sometimes an adverbial is necessary to complete a sentence.

*Catherine was **with a babysitter**. We'd been **to the cinema**.*

But very often the adverbial is an extra element.

*I can remember **very well**. You saw the police car **in front of you**.*

For details, • 12.

Putting in an extra adverbial adds something to the meaning. For example, it can tell us how, when or where something happened.

- 3 An adverbial can modify different parts of the sentence.

*The car **in front of us** was a police car.*

*You were getting **really** impatient.*

*They were going **very** slowly.*

*They inspected the car **thoroughly**.*

***Then** you decided to overtake.*

Here the adverbials add information about the noun *car*, the adjective *impatient*, the adverb *slowly*, the action *inspected the car* and the clause *you decided*.

207 Adverb forms

- 1 Some adverbs are unrelated to other words, e.g. *always, soon, very, perhaps*. But many adverbs are formed from an adjective + *ly*, e.g. *quick quickly, certain certainly*.

NOTE

There are some spelling rules for adverbs in *ly*.

Y changing to *i*: *easy easily* • 294

Adjectives ending in consonant + *le*: *probable probably* • 292(5)

Adjectives ending in *ic*: *magic magically* • 292(5)

- 2 We cannot add *ly* to an adjective which already ends in *ly*. Instead we can either use a prepositional phrase with *manner/way/fashion*, or we can use another adverb.

*We received a **friendly** greeting.* *They greeted us **in a friendly manner**.*

NOT *friendlily*

*That isn't very **likely**.*

*That **probably** won't happen.*

Some adjectives in *ly* are *friendly, lively, lovely, silly, ugly, cowardly, lonely, costly, likely*.

NOTE

Some adjectives ending in *ed* have no adverb form.

*The woman stared in **astonishment**, NOT **astonishedly***

But those ending in *ted* can take an *ly* ending.

*The crowd shouted **excitedly**.*

- 3 Some adverbs have the same form as adjectives.

Adjective

Adverb

*Louise caught the **fast** train.*

*The train was going quite **fast**.*

*We didn't have a **long** wait.*

*We didn't have to wait **long**.*

*I had an **early** night.*

*I went to bed **early**.*

Other adverbs like this are *walk **straight**, sit **still** and bend **low***. For *hard, hardly, late, lately* etc, • (5).

- 4 Sometimes the adverb can be with or without *ly*. It is more informal to leave out *ly*.

*You can buy cassettes **cheap/cheaply** in the market.*

*Do you have to talk so **loud/loudly**?*

*Get there as **quick/quickly** as you can.*

*Go **slow/slowly** here.*

Cheap(ly), loud(ly), quick(ly) and slow(ly) are the most common. Others are *direct(ly), tight(ly) and fair(ly)*. For American usage, • 305(2).

NOTE

- a We use the form without *ly* only in common expressions, e.g. *talk so loud*, *go slow*, *fly direct*, *play fair*. We use *ly* with longer or less common expressions.
Do you have to rustle that newspaper so **loudly**? We need to take action **quickly**.
- b *Right* and *wrong* are adverbs of manner, but *rightly* and *wrongly* express a comment.
I'll try to do it **right** this time.
Helen decided **rightly** to call the police.
- c *First* and *last* are both adjectives and adverbs.
Karen took **first** place/came **first** in the race.
Firstly and *lastly* are linking adverbs.
First/Firstly, I'd like to thank you all for coming.

- 5 There are some pairs such as *hard* and *hardly* which have different meanings.
- | | |
|--|--|
| <i>You've all worked hard.</i> | <i>I've got hardly any money.</i>
(<i>hardly any</i> = almost no) |
| <i>There's a bank quite near.</i> | <i>We've nearly finished.</i> (= almost) |
| <i>I often stay up late.</i> | <i>I've been unwell lately.</i> (= recently) |
| <i>The plane flew high above the clouds.</i> | <i>The theory is highly controversial.</i> (= very) |
| <i>Submarines can go very deep.</i> | <i>Mike feels very deeply about this.</i> |
| <i>Airline staff travel free.</i>
(= without paying) | <i>The prisoners can move around freely.</i>
(= uncontrolled) |
| <i>This ear hurts the most.</i> | <i>We mostly stay in.</i> (= usually) |
- 6 *Hourly*, *daily* etc are formed from *hour*, *day*, *week*, *month* and *year*. They are both adjectives and adverbs.
*It's a **monthly** magazine.* *It comes out **monthly**.*
- 7 *Good* is an adjective, and *well* is its adverb.
*Roger is a **good** singer, isn't he?*
*Roger sings **well**, doesn't he?* NOT *He sings good.*
But *well* is also an adjective meaning 'in good health'.
*I was ill, but I'm **well**/I'm all right now.*
*How are you? ~ Very **well**, IFine, thank you.*
- NOTE We use *well* in expressions such as *well organized*, *well deserved* and *well known*.

208 The position of adverbials

The position of an adverbial depends on what it modifies. It can modify a word or phrase or a whole clause. Its position also depends on what type of adverbial it is and whether it is a single word or a phrase.

1 Modifying a noun, adjective or adverb

- a An adverbial which modifies a noun usually goes after it.
The shop on the corner is closed.
Who's the girl with short hair?
Those people outside are getting wet.
For more examples, • 148.
- b An adverb which modifies an adjective or adverb usually goes before it. • 212
That's very kind of you. *We heard the signal fairly clearly.*

2 Front position, mid position and end position

When an adverbial modifies a verb or a whole clause, there are three main places we can put it.

- Front: **Really**, I can't say.
- Mid: I can't **really** say.
- End: I can't say, **really**.

Sometimes we can also put an adverbial after the subject. • (4) Note c
I really can't say.

3 Front position

- Sure enough*, the police car stopped us.
- Just** hold on a moment.
- In the end* our efforts will surely meet with success.

Front position is at the beginning of a clause. Most types of adverbial can go here. We often put an adverbial in front position when it relates to what has gone before.

You were getting impatient. And then you decided to overtake.

For an example text, • 49(1).

NOTE

A prepositional phrase can sometimes be the subject.

- Along that path* is the quickest way. *After lunch* is usually a quiet time.
- For there + be, • 50.

4 Mid position

- The police are **always** looking for people at this time.
- This stereo is **definitely** faulty.
- I usually* enjoy maths lessons.

Mid position is after an auxiliary verb, after the ordinary verb *be* on its own, or before a simple-tense verb.

	(Auxiliary)			
Subject	(<i>be</i> on its own)	Adverb	(Verb)	
<i>It</i>	<i>doesn't</i>	often	<i>rain</i>	<i>in the Sahara.</i>
<i>We</i>	<i>'ve</i>	just	<i>booked</i>	<i>our tickets.</i>
<i>The news</i>	<i>will</i>	soon	<i>be</i>	<i>out of date.</i>
<i>You</i>	<i>were</i>	probably		<i>right.</i>
<i>You</i>		probably	<i>made</i>	<i>the right decision.</i>
<i>I</i>		always	<i>get</i>	<i>the worst jobs.</i>

Most types of short adverbial can go here, especially adverbs of frequency (*often*), but not phrases.

NOT *I every time get the worst jobs.*

- a In a question there is inversion of subject and auxiliary.
Have you just booked your tickets? Why do I always get the worst jobs?
- b If there are two auxiliaries, then mid position is usually after the first one.
We've just been queuing for tickets. The shops will soon be closing.
But adverbs of manner and some adverbs of degree go after the second auxiliary.
We've been patiently queuing for tickets. You could have completely spoilt everything.

- c We sometimes put an adverb after the subject and before the verb phrase. This happens especially with a negative (*probably doesn't*) or when there is stress (*really 'are*).
- It **probably** doesn't matter very much.*
*You **really** are serious, aren't you?*
- An adverb also goes before *have to*, *used to* and *ought to*.
*I **never** have to wait long for a bus.*
- Sometimes the position can affect the meaning. Compare these sentences.
*They **deliberately** didn't leave the heating on.* (They left it off on purpose.)
*They **didn't deliberately** leave the heating on.* (They left it on by mistake.)

5 End position

- a *I hadn't had a drink **for days**.*
*The police were driving **very slowly**.*
*They're doing this **on purpose**.*
- Most types of adverbial can come here, especially prepositional phrases.
- b If there is an object, then the adverbial usually goes after it.
*I wrapped the parcel **carefully**, NOT *I wrapped carefully the parcel.*
*We'll finish the job **next week**, NOT *We'll finish next week the job.***
- But a short adverbial can go before a long object.
*I wrapped **carefully** all the glasses and ornaments.*
- Here the adverb of manner can also go in mid position.
*I **carefully** wrapped all the glasses and ornaments.*
- c We often put an adverbial in end position when it is new and important information.
*There was a police car in front of us. It was going **very slowly**.*

NOTE

When there are two clauses, the position of the adverb can affect the meaning.

*They agreed **immediately** that the goods would be replaced.* (an immediate agreement)

*They agreed that the goods would be replaced **immediately**.* (an immediate replacement)

6 Order in end position

- a Sometimes there is more than one adverbial in end position. Usually a shorter adverbial goes before a longer one.
*Sam waited **impatiently** outside the post office.*
*We sat **indoors** most of the afternoon.*
*They inspected the car **thoroughly** in a very officious manner.*
- b When there is a close link in meaning between a verb and adverbial, then the adverbial goes directly after the verb. For example, we usually put an adverbial of place next to *go*, *come* etc.
*I **go to work** by bus. Charles **came home** late.*
- c Phrases of time and place can often go in either order.
*There was an accident **last night** on the by-pass.*
*There was an accident **on the by-pass** last night.*

NOTE

A smaller place usually comes before a larger one.

*They live **in a bungalow** near Coventry.*

Manner, time and place usually come before frequency.

*I can find my way around **quite easily, usually.***

*Sarah gets up **early occasionally.***

In more careful English, the adverb of frequency would come in mid position.

*I can **usually** find my way around quite easily.*

When a truth, comment or linking adverb comes in end position, it is usually last, a kind of afterthought.

*Phil's had to stay late at work, **perhaps.***

*Someone handed the money in at the police station, **incredibly.***

*Wendy is a member. She doesn't go to the club very often, **however.***

209 Adverbs of manner

1 Adjectives and adverbs

a Look at these examples.

Adjective

*Kevin had a **quick** snack.*

*Kate is **fluent** in Russian.*

*Think of a **sensible** reply.*

Adverb

*He ate **quickly.***

*She speaks Russian **fluently.***

*Try to reply **sensibly.***

An adjective modifies a noun (*snack*). An adverb of manner modifies a verb (*ate*).

Most adverbs of manner are formed from an adjective + *ly*. For adverbs without *ly*,

- 207(3-4).

b Compare the different types of verb.

Linking verb + adjective

*The inspector **was polite.***

Action verb + adverb

*She **listened politely.** NOT *She listened polite.**

Linking verbs are *be, seem, become, look, feel* etc. • 9. Some verbs can be either linking verbs or action verbs.

Linking verb + adjective

*The speaker **looked nervous.***

*The milk **smelled funny.***

*The atmosphere **grew tense.***

Action verb + adverb

***He looked nervously** round the room.*

*Dave **smelled the milk suspiciously.***

*The plants **grew rapidly.***

2 Prepositional phrases

We can often use a prepositional phrase to express manner.

*Handle **carefully/with care.** They were doing it **deliberately/on purpose.***

*They inspected the car **officially/in an officious manner.***

NOTE

We can often use an adjective or adverb in the prepositional phrase.

*It **must be handled with great care.***

*They inspected the car **in an extremely officious manner.***

3 Position

- a We put an adverbial of manner mainly in end position, • 208(5). These are real examples from stories.

*'I didn't know whether to tell you or not,' she said **anxiously**.*
*The sun still shone **brightly** on the quiet street.*
*We continued our labours **in silence**.*

NOTE

An adverb of manner can also modify an adjective.

*The team were **quietly** confident.* *The dog lay **peacefully** asleep.*

- b The adverbial can sometimes come in front position for emphasis. • 49(1c)
***Without another word**, he walked slowly away up the strip.*

210 Place and time

1 Position

- a Adverbials of place and time often go in end position.

*The match will be played **at Villa Park**.*
*The President made the comment to reporters **yesterday**.*
*A Norwegian ferry was being repaired **last night** after running aground **in the Thames**.*
*The office is closed **for two weeks**.*

For more than one adverbial in end position, • 208(6).

- b They can also go in front position.

*I've got two meetings tomorrow. And **on Thursday** I have to go to London.*
 For details and an example text, •49(1).

- c Some short adverbials of time can go in mid position.

*I've **just** seen Debbie.* *We'll **soon** be home.*
 These include *now*, *then*, *just* (= a short time ago), *recently*, *soon*, *at once*, *immediately*, *finally*, *since*, *already*, *still* and *no longer*.

- d An adverbial of place or time can modify a noun.

*The radiator **in the hall** is leaking.*
*Exports **last year** broke all records.*

2 *Yet, still and already*

- a We use *yet* for something that is expected.

*Have you replied to the letter **yet**? ~ No, **not yet**.*
*I got up late. I haven't had breakfast **yet**.*
Yet comes at the end of a question or negative statement.

NOTE

We can use *yet* in mid position, but it is a little formal.

*We have **not yet** reached a decision on the matter.*

- b We use *still* for something going on longer than expected. In positive statements and questions it goes in mid position.

*I got up late. I'm **still** having breakfast.*

*Does Carl **still** ride that old motor-bike he had at college?*

In negative statements *still* comes after the subject.

*The child **still** hasn't learnt to read.*

This is more emphatic than *The child hasn't learnt to read yet.*

NOTE

Still can go after a negative auxiliary when we express surprise. Compare these sentences.

*I **still** don't feel well. (= I still feel ill.)*

*You don't **still** feel sick, do you? (= I am surprised that you still feel sick.)*

- c We use *already* for something happening sooner than expected. We use it mainly in mid position in positive statements and questions.

*I got up early. I've **already** had breakfast.*

*Have you **already** replied to the letter? ~ Yes, I have. ~ That was quick. It only came yesterday.*

Already in end position has more emphasis.

*Good heavens! It's lunch time **already**.*

*Have you typed the whole report **already**?*

NOTE

Already can go after the subject and before a stressed auxiliary.

*I **already** have typed the report, I tell you.*

3 *No longer, any more and any longer*

- a We use *no longer* for something coming to an end. It goes in mid position.

*Mrs Hicks **no longer** works at the town hall.*

No longer is a little formal. In informal speech we use *any more*. It goes in end position in a negative sentence.

*Barbara doesn't work at the town hall **any more**.*

- b We often use *any longer* in a negative sentence for something that is about to end.

*I'm not going to wait **any longer**.*

4 *Long and far*

- a We normally use the adverbs *long* and *far* only in questions and negative statements.

*Have you been waiting **long**? It isn't **far** from here to the motorway.*

In positive statements we use *a long time/way*.

*I had to wait **a long time**/ wait ages. It's **a long way** to Vladivostok.*

- b But we use *long* and *far* after *too*, *so* and *as*, and with *enough*.

*The speech went on **too long**.*

*I'm annoyed because I've had to wait **so long**/such a long time.*

*Let's go back now. We've walked **far enough**.*

NOTE

We can also use the comparative and superlative forms in positive statements.

*The journey takes **longer** in the rush hour. You threw the ball **furthest**.*

5 After

We do not often use *after* on its own as an adverb.

*We all went to the cinema and then **afterwards** to a pizza restaurant.*

*The talk lasted half an hour. Then/After **that** there was a discussion.*

We can say *the day/week after*.

*I sent the form off, and I got a reply the week **after**/a week **later**.*

211 Adverbs of frequency

- 1 An adverb of frequency usually goes in mid position.

*The bus doesn't **usually** stop here. I can **never** open these packets.*

*It's **always** cold up here. I **often** get up in the night.*

Some adverbs of frequency are *always*; *normally*, *generally*, *usually*; *often*, *frequently*; *sometimes*, *occasionally*; *seldom*, *rarely*; *never*.

NOTE

- a The adverb can sometimes go after the subject and before a negative auxiliary. Compare these sentences.

*I **don't often** have breakfast. (= I seldom have breakfast.)*

*I often **don't have** breakfast. (= I often go without breakfast.)*

Sometimes goes before a negative auxiliary.

*You **sometimes can't** get a table here.*

- b *Seldom* and *rarely* are a little formal. In informal speech we use *not often*.

*I **don't often** play cards.*

- c *Never* is a negative word. • 17(4)

*I've **never** felt so embarrassed in my life. Will you **never** learn?*

We use *ever* mainly in questions.

*Have you **ever** done any ballroom dancing? ~ No, never.*

But we can also use *ever* with negative words.

*I **haven't ever** felt so embarrassed.*

*You **hardly ever** buy me flowers.*

Ever can add emphasis to the negative.

***No one ever** said that to me before.*

***Nothing ever** happens in this place.*

*I **never ever** want to see that awful man again.*

We can also use *ever* in conditions and comparisons.

*If you **ever** feel like a chat, just drop in.*

*James swam faster **than** he'd **ever** done before.*

If can go before the subject.

***If ever** you feel like a chat, just drop in.*

We do not normally use *ever* in positive statements.

*I **always** have lots to do. NOT I ever have lots to do.*

- 2 *Normally*, *generally*, *usually*, *frequently*, *sometimes* and *occasionally* also go in front or end position.

***Normally** I tip taxi-drivers. My sister comes to see me **sometimes**.*

Often, *seldom* and *rarely* can go in end position, especially with e.g. *very* or *quite*.

*Doctors get called out at night **quite often**.*

A lot (= often) goes in end position.

*We go out **a lot** at weekends.*

NOTE

- a *Always*, *never* and *often* in front position are emphatic.

***Always** the ghost appeared at the same time.*

We can use *always* and *never* in instructions.

***Never** try to adjust the machine while it is switched on.*

- b For *never*, *seldom* and *rarely* with inversion, • 17(6c).

- 3 We can also use a phrase with *every*, *most* or *some* to express frequency. These phrases can go in front or end position.
Every summer we all go sailing together.
 The dog has to have a walk *every day*.
 The postman calls *most days*.
Some evenings we don't have the television on at all.
- We can also use *once*, *twice*, *three times* etc.
 The committee meets *once a month*.
 Two tablets to be taken *three times a day*.
 Paul has been married *several times*.

NOTE

Compare *often* and *several times*.

We've *often* been skiing. (= many times over a long period)

We've been skiing *several times*. (= perhaps four or five times)

- 4 The adverbs *daily* (= every day), *weekly* etc go in end position.
 Are you paid *weekly or monthly*?

212 Adverbs of degree

1 Modifying an adjective or adverb

- a We can use an adverb of degree before some adjectives and adverbs.
- + Adjective: *It's very cold. I'm so tired.*
 You're absolutely right. These are rather expensive.
 We're a bit busy today. It wasn't at all interesting.
- + Adverb: *I come here quite often. I saw her fairly recently.*
 We hardly ever go out. He agreed somewhat reluctantly.

Here are some common adverbs of degree.

Full degree: *completely, totally, absolutely, entirely, quite*

Large degree: *very, extremely, really, awfully, terribly*

Medium degree: *rather, fairly, quite, pretty, somewhat*

Small degree: *a little, a bit, slightly*

Negative: *hardly, scarcely* • 17(4), *at all*

Others: *so, as; too; more, most, less, least* • 220

We can also use a fraction or percentage.

The bottle is only half full.

The forecast was eighty per cent accurate.

NOTE

- a We use *completely, totally, absolutely* etc with words expressing a full or large degree.

This tin opener is completely useless. (*useless* = absolutely no use)

We are absolutely delighted at the news. (*delighted* = very pleased)

We do not normally use *very* or *extremely* with these words.

It's very unsatisfactory. NOT *It's very useless.*

We were extremely pleased. NOT *We were extremely delighted.*

Some words that do not normally take *very* or *extremely* are: *amazed, amazing, appalled, appalling, awful, complete, delighted, dreadful, essential, false, fascinated, horrible, ideal, impossible, incredible, magnificent, marvellous, perfect, terrible, terrific, useless.*

- b After a phrase with *very* we can put *indeed* for extra emphasis.

It's very cold indeed today.

- c We often use *very* with a negative.

These photos aren't very good.

This is more usual than *These photos aren't good* or *These photos are bad*.

- d Instead of *really* we can use *real* in informal speech, especially in American English.

It's real cold today.

- e *Pretty* and *a bit* are informal.

- f *Somewhat*, *a little*, *a bit* and *slightly* have an unfavourable sense.

The carriage was somewhat crowded.

I felt a bit sick.

But we can use them with comparatives in a favourable sense.

I felt a bit better/somewhat more cheerful.

- g *At all* can also go in end position.

It wasn't interesting at all.

For phrases used to emphasize a negative, • 17(6b).

- h In informal English we can use *that* instead of *so* in a negative sentence.

No, they don't own an aeroplane. They aren't that rich.

- i We can use *much*, *far* or *rather* to modify *too*.

This coat is much too big for me.

- j For *twice/three times as expensive*, • 194(2).

- b *Enough* comes after the adjective or adverb it modifies.

Are you warm enough?

Steve didn't react quickly enough.

Compare *too* and *enough*.

It's too small (for me)./It isn't big enough (for me).

NOTE

Compare *enough* as adverb and as quantifier.

I'm not rich enough./I haven't enough money.

2 Modifying a comparative adjective or adverb

This new sofa is much nicer than the old one. NOT very nicer

Come on. Try a bit harder.

The alternative route was no quicker.

Before a comparative we can use (*very*) *much*, *a lot*; *rather*, *somewhat*; *a little*, *a bit*, *slightly*; *three times* etc.

3 Modifying a superlative

It was just about the nicest holiday I could have imagined.

We offer easily the best value/by far the best value.

NOTE

The adverb can sometimes come after the phrase with a superlative.

We offer the best value by far.

4 *So/such*, *quite* and *too*

We can use most adverbs of degree with an attributive adjective.

that very tall girl my fairly low score a rather nice restaurant

But after *a/an* we do not normally use *so* or *quite*.

She's such a tall girl. NOT a so tall girl

It's quite an old book. (a quite old book is less usual)

Too or *as* and the adjective go before *a/an*.

*You've cut **too short a piece**, NOT a too short piece*

*I know just **as quick a way**. NOT a just as quick way*

We can use *so* in the same way, although the pattern with *such* is more usual.

*I don't like to criticize **so famous an artist**.*

*I don't like to criticize **such a famous artist**.*

NOTE

a We can use *rather* in both patterns.

*We had **a rather long wait/rather a long wait**.*

b We can use *such* and *rather* + *a/an* + noun without an adjective.

*That man is **such an idiot**. It's **rather a pity** you won't be here.*

We can also use *a bit of*.

*Sorry. The flat's in **a bit of a mess**.*

Quite in this pattern means something large or special.

*We had **quite a wait**. That was **quite a party**.*

The meaning is the same as *That was **some** party.* • 179(5c)

5 *Quite* and *rather*

a Stress

In these examples with *quite*, the adjective is stressed.

*It's quite **'warm** today.* (It's warmer than expected.)

*Your friends are quite **'rich**.* (They've got a lot of money.)

If we stress *quite*, we limit the force of the adjective.

*It's **'quite** warm.* (but not as warm as expected)

*Things went **'quite** well.* (but not as well as I'd hoped)

NOTE We do not stress *rather*.

b *Quite* warm/*rather* cold

When we make a favourable comment, we usually prefer *quite* to *rather*. *Quite* is unstressed.

*It's **quite** pleasant here. It was **quite** a good party.*

In unfavourable comments, we usually prefer *rather*, but *quite* is possible.

*It's **rather/quite** depressing here. It was **rather/quite** a dull party.*

*It was **rather/quite** inconvenient having to change trains twice.*

Rather in a favourable comment often means 'to a surprising or unusual degree'.

*I expected the party to be dull, but it was actually **rather** good.*

*The test paper was **rather** easy.* (It isn't usually so easy.)

c Two meanings of *quite*

Quite + adjective can express a medium degree or a full degree, depending on the kind of adjective.

Medium degree: 'fairly'

Full degree: 'completely'

*The task is **quite** difficult.*

*The task is **quite** impossible.*

*The film was **quite** good.*

*The film was **quite** brilliant.*

*I feel **quite** tired.*

*I feel **quite** exhausted.*

With adjectives like **difficult**, we can use different degrees: *fairly difficult*, *a bit difficult*, *very difficult*, *more difficult* etc. Adjectives like *impossible* and *brilliant* already mean a full or large degree. An impossible task is *completely* out of the question; a brilliant film is *very* good.

Quite means 'completely' before these adjectives:

<i>absurd</i>	<i>brilliant</i>	<i>disgusting</i>	<i>fascinated</i>	<i>perfect</i>
<i>alone</i>	<i>certain</i>	<i>dreadful</i>	<i>fascinating</i>	<i>ridiculous</i>
<i>amazed</i>	<i>dead</i>	<i>empty</i>	<i>horrible</i>	<i>right</i>
<i>amazing</i>	<i>delicious</i>	<i>extraordinary</i>	<i>impossible</i>	<i>sure</i>
<i>appalled</i>	<i>determined</i>	<i>exhausted</i>	<i>incredible</i>	<i>true</i>
<i>appalling</i>	<i>different</i>	<i>exhausting</i>	<i>magnificent</i>	<i>useless</i>
<i>awful</i>	<i>disgusted</i>	<i>false</i>	<i>marvellous</i>	<i>wrong</i>

NOTE

a We can sometimes use *fairly* etc with some of the adjectives listed above, especially in informal speech.

The task is fairly impossible. I feel pretty exhausted.

But **quite** *impossible/exhausted* etc always means 'completely'.

b *Not quite* means 'not completely'.

What you said is not quite true. (= almost true)

c *Quite* + *like/enjoy/want* = *fairly*.

I quite enjoyed the film. It was quite good.

Quite + *agree/understand* = *completely*.

I quite agree. You're quite right.

6 Modifying a preposition

Some adverbs of degree can modify a preposition.

The offices are right in the centre of town.

I'm not very up to date, I'm afraid.

For more examples, • 224(3).

7 Modifying a verb

a We can use an adverb of degree to modify a verb.

I'm really enjoying myself.

We were rather hoping to have a look round.

The doorman absolutely refused to let us in.

The suitcase was so heavy I could hardly lift it.

In mid position we can use *absolutely*, *completely*, *totally*; *just*, *really*; *almost*, *nearly*; *hardly*, *scarcely*; *quite*, *rather*.

Absolutely, *completely*, *totally* and *rather* can also go in end position.

I completely forgot the time. / I forgot the time completely.

NOTE

The adverb goes before a stressed auxiliary • 208(4) Note c, and also sometimes before a negative auxiliary.

I just don't know what to do. The driver almost didn't see the red light.

b We often use an adverb of degree before a passive participle.

The car was badly damaged in the accident.

Our schedule was completely disrupted by the changes.

- c Some adverbs go in end position when they modify a verb.

*During the speech my attention wandered **a lot**.*

*This tooth aches **terribly**.*

These are *a lot, very much; a bit, a little, slightly; somewhat; terribly, awfully; more, (the) most.*

- d We can use *much* or *very much* in a negative sentence or question, but we cannot use *much* on its own in a positive statement.

Negative: *I don't like this sweater **much/very much**.*

Positive: *I like this sweater **very much**. NOT *I like this sweater much.**

8 Modifying a quantifier

We can use these patterns.

- a *very/so/too + many/much/few/little*
*There were **so many people** there.*
- b *such/rather/quite + a lot (of)*
*There were **such a lot of** people there.*
*We've had **rather a lot of** complaints.*
- c *quite + a few/a bit (of)*
*We've had **quite a few** complaints.*
- d *almost/nearly + all/every*
***Almost all** the pudding had been eaten.*
- e *hardly any*
*There was **hardly any** pudding left.*
- f *a lot/much/a bit/a little/any/no + more/less*
*Would you like **a bit more** pudding?*

NOTE

We can use *much, far* or *rather* to modify *too*.

*You've put **far too much** salt in.*

213 Focus and viewpoint

1 Focus adverbials

We sometimes use an adverb to focus on a particular word or phrase.

*Emily works every day, **even** on Sundays.*

*I don't like alcohol, **especially** beer.*

NOTE

Compare *even* and *also*.

*Everyone laughed, **even** the teacher.*

(Everyone includes the teacher.)

*We've invited the whole class, and **also** the teacher.*

(The whole class does not include the teacher.)

2 *Only and even*

- a In rather formal or careful English we put *only* and *even* before the word or phrase we want to focus on.

*I knew **only one** of the other guests.*

*Alan always wears shorts. He wears them **even in winter**.*

But in informal English *only* and *even* can be in mid position.

*I **only** knew one of the other guests.*

*Alan **even** wears shorts in winter.*

We stress the word we want to focus on, e.g. *one, winter*.

NOTE

- a *Only* can be an adjective.
*Saturday is the **only** day I can go shopping.*
- b We can use the adverb *just* (= *only*).
*I knew **just** one of the other guests.*
- b When we focus on the subject, we put *only* and *even* before it.
***Only you** would do a silly thing like that.* (No one else would.)
***Even the experts** don't know the answer.*
- NOTE For *Only then did I realize*, • 17(6c).
- c In official written English, e.g. on notices, *only* comes after the word or phrase it focusses on.
*Waiting limited to **30 minutes only***

3 Viewpoint adverbials

These express the idea that we are looking at a situation from a particular aspect or point of view.

***Financially**, things are a bit difficult at the moment.*

*Can you manage **transport-wise**, or do you need a lift?*

*The building is magnificent **from an architectural point of view**, but it's hell to work in.*

***As far as insurance is concerned**, we can fix that up for you.*

NOTE

A viewpoint adverb can also modify an adjective.

The scheme is *economically beneficial but **environmentally** disastrous*.

214 Truth adverbs

- 1 A truth adverb expresses what the speaker knows about the truth of a statement: how likely it is to be true, or to what degree it is true.

***Perhaps/Maybe** Mandy has missed the bus.*

*You've **certainly/undoubtedly** made a good start.*

*I agree with you **basically**. Service isn't included, **presumably**.*

***Clearly** the matter is urgent. The boxer **allegedly** took drugs.*

Most of these adverbs can go in front, mid or end position. *Certainly, definitely* and *probably* usually go in mid position. But in a negative sentence we put a truth adverb after the subject rather than after the auxiliary.

*You **certainly** haven't wasted any time.*

*Service **presumably** isn't included.*

NOTE For Mandy *might* have missed the bus, • 97.

- 2 We can also use a prepositional phrase.
*The whole thing is ridiculous **in my opinion**.*
***Ofcourse** I'll pay you back.*
*We get on quite well together **on the whole**.*
- 3 We can also use a clause with *I*.
***I think** the whole thing is ridiculous.*
*Someone's fused the lights, **I expect**.*
***I'm sure** you've made a mistake.*

215 Comment adverbs

- 1 We use this kind of adverb to make a comment on what we are saying
***Luckily** no one was killed. (= It was lucky that no one was killed.)*
*The newspaper wasn't interested in the story, **surprisingly**.*
*I'm **afraid/Unfortunately** we didn't win anything.*
- 2 We can also use an adverb to comment on someone's behaviour.
*Dick **wisely** didn't interfere. (= It was wise of Dick not to interfere.)*
Compare the adverbs of comment and manner.
***I stupidly** left the car unlocked. (= It was stupid of me.)*
*The man stared **stupidly**. (= in a stupid manner)*
- 3 We can use a phrase with *to* for someone's feelings about something.
***To my surprise**, the newspaper wasn't interested in the story.*
***To Phil's delight**, his plan proved successful.*
- 4 We can comment on why we are saying something.
***Honestly/To be honest**, I think you're making the wrong decision.*

216 Linking adverbs

A linking adverb relates to the previous clause or sentence. It most often goes in front position, but it can go in mid or end position. Here are some real examples.

*But the baby does not just grow bigger and heavier. Its shape and body proportions **also** change as it grows up.*

*When Beethoven was fourteen, he was forced to give lessons to support his parents. **However**, he still found time to take a few violin lessons, and he went on composing.*

*If you pay the bill in full within 25 days you won't be charged interest. **Otherwise** you are charged interest on any balance outstanding.*

Some other linking adverbs are *as well*, *too*, *in addition*, *furthermore*, • 244; *nevertheless*, *on the other hand*, • 246; *therefore*, *consequently*, *as a result*, • 247; *likewise*; *instead*. They have similar meanings to conjunctions such as *and*, *but*, *so* and *if*.

2 Here are some other ways of relating one clause or sentence to another.

Ordering:	<i>There are two reasons. Firstly, I'm not interested, and secondly, I haven't got the time.</i>
Summing up:	<i>In conclusion, I'd like to say a few words about future prospects.</i>
Rephrasing:	<i>The matter is under consideration. In other words, they're thinking about it.</i>
Correcting:	<i>I'll see you tomorrow then. Or rather on Monday.</i>
Giving examples:	<i>We've got lots of things we could sell. There's the car, for example.</i>
Picking up a topic:	<i>I think I'll have the sausages. ~ Talking of sausages, did you know there's a barbecue on Saturday?</i>
Changing the subject:	<i>I had a lovely lunch. ~ Good. By the way, where did you put that file?</i>
Supporting a statement:	<i>I think I'd better be going. It's past midnight, after all.</i>
Dismissing something:	<i>I don't know whether we did the right thing. Anyway, it doesn't matter now.</i>
Comparing:	<i>The government sold the telephone service to private investors. Gas and electricity were privatized in the same way.</i>