

Adverbial Phrases

An **adverb** is a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb by making its meaning more specific.

Adverbs that Modify Verbs

Adverbs add meaning to verbs and verb phrases by answering the questions: *when? where? how?* and *to what degree?*

QUESTION

VERB

When?

fly
had a

Where?

jump
was c

How?

argued
will s

To what degree?

finish
would

When modifying a verb, an **adverb** may appear in various positions in relation to the verb.

Eventually the train will arrive at the station.

The train will **eventually** arrive at the station.

The train will arrive at the station **eventually**.

Negative words also function as adverbs modifying verbs. **Adverbs** include the word *not* and the contraction *-n't*. Other negative words can also function as adverbs of time, place, and degree.

The cow is **not** in the barn.

The cow is **nowhere** in sight.

I **never** saw a purple cow.

The cow **hardly** chews her cud.

Adverbs That Modify Adjectives

Adverbs can give additional meaning to adjectives. An adverb that modifies an adjective answers the question *to what degree?*

QUESTION

To what degree?

ADJECTIVE

beautiful shy
optimistic
clean

ADVERB

very beautiful
rather shy
unusually optimistic
thoroughly clean

Adverbs that modify adjectives generally appear directly before the word they modify.

The train is **extremely** late.

June felt **rather** weak.

Will pitches **incredibly** fast.

My **very** best friend moved.

Adverbs That Modify Adverbs

Sometimes **adverbs** are used to give extra meaning to other adverbs. An adverb that modifies an adverb answers the question *to what degree?*

Question

To what degree?

Adverb

walked **slowly**
always wins
 call **often**

Adverb

walked **quite** slowly
almost always wins
 call **too** often

An **adverb** that modifies another adverb appears directly before the modified word.

They were **only** partially convinced.

Please speak **more** slowly.

The play ended **somewhat** abruptly.

I know him **very** well.

Forms of Adverbs

Like adjectives, some **adverbs** have different forms to indicate degree of comparison. The comparative form of an adverb compares two actions. The superlative form of an adverb compares more than two actions.

For adverbs of only one syllable, add *-er* to make the comparative form and *-est* to make the superlative form.

POSITIVE

plays **hard**

climbed **high**

When an adverb ends in *-ly*, use the word *more* to form the comparative and *most* to form the superlative.

POSITIVE

walks **slowly**

smiles **easily**

Some adverbs do not form the comparative and superlative in the regular manner.

POSITIVE

skates **well**
dances **badly**
knows **little**
goes **far**

COMPARATIVE

skates **better**
dances **worse**
knows **less**
goes **farther**

SUPERLATIVE

skates **best**
dances **worst**
knows **least**
goes **farthest**

Formative Assessment

Lessons 56-57

Underline each adverb.

- 1) The person read slowly but clearly and expressively.
- 2) Adam, you are driving too recklessly.
- 3) The airplane started moving slowly but quickly gained speed.
- 4) I spoke too harshly to my friends.
- 5) The man stopped suddenly and quickly turned around.
- 6) Janice plays the guitar well.
- 7) Jack ran quickly, but steadily, in the race.

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Complete each sentence with the proper form of the adverb in parentheses.

- 8) (fast) Jason wanted to run the fastest at our school.
- 9) (serious) He trained more seriously than he had before.
- 10) (frequently) Jason is on the track most frequently of all the runners.
- 11) (quickly) He ran the sprint more quickly than he did yesterday.
- 12) (hard) Coach congratulated Jason for being the player to work the hardest.

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