

THE ADVERB

The Adverb

The Adverb is the part of speech which determines the character of the action. Semantically adverbs fall into some groups.

Place	here, there, away, far
Time and frequency	now, then, again, always, still, today, once, twice, never, ago, ever, just, yesterday, already, sometimes, yet, later, often, usually
Manner	together, well, fast, hard, quietly
Degree	very, really, too, quite, exactly, right, pretty, more, relatively, slightly, almost, thoroughly, completely, basically
Stance (<i>your attitude towards what is said</i>)	absolutely, of course, probably, really, actually, mainly, (un)fortunately, curiously, frankly, honestly, seriously, personally, surely, worryingly, interestingly, etc.

Category of adverb

1. **Simple adverbs** are single words that are not formed from compounds. Here belong *well*, *too*, *rather*, *quite*, *soon*, and *here*. Some simple adverbs are clearly related to other word classes: *fast* and *long* can be adjectives; *down* and *round* can be used as prepositions; *today* and *tomorrow* can be used as nouns. Some simple adverbs originated as compounds, but the independent meaning of the two parts is no longer transparent (e.g. *already*, *indeed*).

2. **Compound adverbs** are formed by combining two or more elements into a single word. Here belong such adverbs as *anyway* (*any* + *way*), *nowhere* (*no* + *where*), and *heretofore* (*here* + *to* + *fore*).

3. **Adverbs derived by suffixation** are formed by adding the suffix *-ly* to the base form of an adjective:

clear — *clearly*, happy — *happily*, exact — *exactly*,
lucky — *luckily*, glad — *gladly*, real — *really*.

He was fundamentally stupid.

English spelling is notoriously difficult.

Henry is in love with Bianca. Hopelessly, helplessly,
mindlessly, gloriously, magnificently.

He turns round smiling cheesily.

Two other common suffixes are *-wise* and *-wards* (added to some nouns and prepositions).

homewards, seawards, onwards, afterwards, likewise,
clockwise

4. **Fixed phrases** such as *of course, kind of, at last*.

Some words ending in **-ly** are adjectives, not adverbs:

lovely, lonely, lively, friendly, manly, womanly, daily, monthly.

Compare the following:

They are **friendly** (adj.) people.

They greeted us **in a friendly** (adv. mod.) **way**.

The adverbs *hard, high, fast, early, late, long, far, little, much, straight, near, wrong*, coincide with the corresponding adjectives.

Compare:

It's **hard** (adj.) work. — They work **hard** (adv.).

These are **fast** (adj.) cars. — They drive **fast** (adv.).

We took an **early** (adj.) train. — The train arrived **early**. (adv.)


Adverbs have degrees of comparison: *the positive degree*, *the comparative degree*, and *the superlative degree*. Adverbs ending in *-ly* form their degrees *analytically*, by adding the words *more* (*less*) or *most* (*least*) to the base form of the adverb.

Simple adverbs form their degrees with the help of the inflections **-er**, **-est**. Superlative forms are very rarely used with adverbs, while comparative forms are occasionally used.

I just kept working **harder** and **harder**.

Now he went **oftener** to visit his friends.

You really ought to go out **more often**.



In some cases an adverb can be made comparative in both ways:

oftener — more often

All the registers tend to use ***more often*** when the adverb is followed by ***than***:

She went to the theater **more often** now **than** she used to.



The following adverbs have irregular degrees of comparison:

far { — farther — farthest
— further — furthest

well — better — best

badly — worse — worst

little — less — least

much — more — most