



A1 Adjectives and Adverbs Explanations

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Adjectives Basics

Adjectives (like cold, big, easy, interesting or beautiful) tell you more about nouns. In English, adjectives don't change depending on the noun. We don't say '~~reds~~-dresses', for example.

We can put adjectives in two places.

1: We can put adjectives before the noun. Determiners, like 'a', 'the' or 'this' come before the adjective.

- A big dog
- The beautiful city
- Cold weather

2: We can put adjectives after a linking verb, like 'be', 'become', 'get', 'seem', 'look' or 'feel'.

- The dog is big.
- The city looks beautiful.
- It's getting cold.

If we use more than one adjective before a noun, we put commas between them. We don't use 'and'. Colour adjectives usually come after other kinds of adjectives and adjectives that give an opinion, like good, bad, or delicious, often come before other adjectives.

- A big, blue bowl was on the table.
- NOT: ~~A big and blue bowl was on the table.~~
- NOT: ~~A blue, big bowl was on the table.~~



If we use more than one adjective after a linking verb, we use 'and' before the last adjective.

- The bowl is big and blue.

We can use other conjunctions, like 'but' with adjectives after linking verbs.

- The bowl is big but light.

We can use adverbs, like 'very', 'so', 'too', 'quite' or 'really' before adjectives.

- The bowl is very big.
- A really big bowl was on the table.
- This bowl is too big.



Adverbs of Manner

Adverbs of manner tell us how an action is done.

Usually we make adverbs of manner by adding 'ly' to the adjective.

- bad - badly
- beautiful - beautifully
- quick - quickly

When the adjective ends in 'y', we usually drop the 'y' and add 'ily'

- happy - happily
- easy - easily

When the adjective ends in 'e', we usually drop the 'e' and add 'ly'.

- gentle - gently

There are some irregular adverbs.

- good - well
- fast - fast
- late - late

We usually use adverbs of manner at the end of a clause.

- She sings beautifully.
- He runs fast.
- She lifted the baby gently.
- He speaks English well.

An adverb can't come between a verb and its object.

- NOT: ~~He speaks well English.~~
- NOT: ~~She lifted gently the baby.~~



Adjective or Adverb?

We need to be careful to use an adjective before a noun or after a linking verb, and an adverb when we are saying something about the verb.

- He speaks perfect English ('perfect' is an adjective that gives us more information about the noun 'English').
- He speaks English perfectly ('perfectly' is an adverb that give us more information about the verb 'speaks').
- She is a terrible singer ('terrible' is an adjective that gives us more information about the noun 'singer').
- She sings terribly ('terribly' is an adverb that gives us more information about the verb 'sings').



Well or Good?

'Good' is an adjective. We use it before a noun or after a linking verb.

- She is a good singer.
- His English is good.

'Well' is often an adverb. We use it to give more information about a verb.

- She sings well.
- He speaks English well.

'Well' can also be an adjective that means 'healthy'.

- Are you well? (= Are you healthy?)
- She doesn't look well. (= She doesn't look healthy.)



Adverbs of Frequency

Some adverbs tell you how often something happens, like ‘always’, ‘sometimes’, ‘never’ and ‘usually’. We call these adverbs of frequency.

We usually use adverbs of frequency in the middle of the sentence. They go before the main verb but after the verb 'be'.

- We never eat breakfast.
- He usually walks to work.
- He is always hungry.
- She is often early.

We also use longer phrases like ‘once a week’ to say how often something happens.

We can say:

- Once a day / week / month / year
- Twice a day / week / month / year
- Three times a day / week / month / year
- Every day / week / month / year / morning / afternoon / evening / night

These phrases usually go at the end of the sentence or clause.

- I play the piano every day.
- He calls his mother once a week.
- She goes to the dentist twice a year.



Adverbs of Degree

These adverbs say how completely something happens.

We use 'really' and 'quite' with some verbs in the middle of the sentence, before the main verb.

- I really like this cake.
- I quite like this cake.

We also use 'a lot' and 'much' with some verbs. 'A lot' and 'much' go in end position. We use 'much' with negative sentences.

- I like this cake a lot.
- I don't like this cake much.