

The Adverb

What Is an Adverb?

3g. An **adverb** is a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

REMINDER A **verb** is a word or word group that shows action or state of being. Some examples of verbs include *leave*, *wash*, *walk*, and *be*. An **adjective** is a word that modifies or describes a noun or a pronoun. Some examples of adjectives include *full*, *unusual*, and *simple*.

Adverbs answer the following questions: Where? How often? How long? When? To what extent? How much? How?

EXAMPLES Leave the grapes **here**, and I will wash them **soon**. [The adverb *here* modifies the verb *Leave* and tells *where*. The adverb *soon* modifies the verb phrase *will wash* and tells *when*.]
I walked **extremely carefully** on the ice. [The adverb *extremely* modifies the adverb *carefully* and tells *to what extent*. The adverb *carefully* modifies the verb *walked* and tells *how*.]
Was the bucket **completely** full? [The adverb *completely* modifies the adjective *full* and tells *how much*.]
We will be friends **forever** and will visit **frequently**. [The adverb *forever* modifies the verb phrase *will be* and tells *how long*. The adverb *frequently* modifies the verb phrase *will visit* and tells *how often*.]

EXERCISE A Draw an arrow from the underlined adverb in each of the following sentences to the word or words it modifies. Hint: An adverb modifies each word in a verb phrase, not just the main verb.

Example 1. Paul hasn't discovered any new stars yet, but he is trying. [The adverb *n't (not)* modifies the verb *has discovered* by telling *to what extent*.]

1. Paul will eventually become a scientist. [*Eventually* tells *when* about which words?]
2. He continuously observes the world.
3. Sometimes he studies the stars and the planets.
4. He reads books about very unusual plants and animals.
5. He is almost never absent from science class at school.

The Position of Adverbs

Adverbs may appear at various places in a sentence. Adverbs may come before, after, or between the words they modify.

EXAMPLES I soon realized my mistake. [The adverb *soon* modifies the verb *realized*.]

I realized my mistake soon.

Soon I realized my mistake.

I had soon realized my mistake. [The adverb *soon* modifies the verb phrase *had realized*.]

EXERCISE B Draw one line under the adverb in the following sentences. Then, draw an arrow to the word or words the adverb modifies. Remember to draw the arrow to each part of a verb phrase. Hint: Each sentence has only one adverb.

Examples 1. We had been secretly planning the party for weeks. [The adverb *secretly* describes the verb phrase *had been planning* by telling *how*.]

2. Of course, we didn't tell Cindy anything about it. [The adverb *n't (not)* describes the verb *did tell* by telling *to what extent*.]

6. Cindy had already turned thirteen. [Which word modifies the verb *had turned*?]
7. Her birthday was celebrated by her family in a very simple way. [Which word modifies the adjective *simple*?]
8. Quietly, her friends were planning a big surprise party.
9. We would celebrate her birthday late!
10. She would never suspect this surprise party.
11. When would the day of the party arrive?
12. All of Cindy's friends eagerly gathered at my house.
13. I called Cindy and casually invited her to my house.
14. She came immediately and knocked on the door.
15. I opened the door, and all of us happily shouted, "Happy birthday!"