



Unit 55 – Adverb Types & Position (*We went to the theatre today.. She speaks fluently..*)

A) Adverbs can be used in three positions in a sentence (or clause) to modify a verb:

<u>Front</u> – the adverb comes before the subject:	<i>Perhaps they are already there by now.</i>
<u>Mid</u> – the adverb comes i) between the subject and verb:	<i>I seldom get up too late on weekends.</i>
ii) after 'be' as the main verb:	<i>He is usually in the office by 8am.</i>
iii) after an auxiliary verb:	<i>I have always wanted to be a writer.</i>
<u>End</u> – the adverb comes i) directly after the verb:	<i>Opening the gift, she smiled beautifully.</i>
ii) later in the clause or sentence:	<i>He took the matter very seriously.</i>

B) Types of adverbs and their positions – there are 10 different types of adverbs with varying positional rules:

1. Adverbs of Manner – e.g.: *nicely, beautifully, slowly, carefully, intensely, etc.*

These adverbs come after the direct object or after the verb (if there isn't a direct object).

-> He did the presentation **professionally**. (The adverb comes after the direct object; *the presentation*.)

-> Ms. Kim speaks **fluently**. (The adverb of manner *fluently* comes after the verb; *speaks*.)

2. Adverbs of Place – e.g.: *here, there, through, below, etc.*

Adverbs of place operate much like adverbs of manner. They come after the direct object or verb.

-> I'm meeting Bob **here** at the gate. (The adverb of place *there* comes after the direct object; *Bob*.)

-> We played the game **under the lights**. (The adverb *under the lights* comes after the verb; *played*.)

3. Adverbs of Time – e.g.: *recently, now, later, tomorrow, today, etc.*

Adverbs of time are usually placed at the end of the sentence but they may also come at the beginning as well.

-> I will return your books to you **today**. (Adverbs of definite time are often placed in the end position

-> He **recently** switched to a vegan diet. while indefinite adverbs can be placed at the *front, mid or end*.)

4. Adverbs of Frequency – e.g.: *always, usually, sometimes, never, etc.*

Adverbs of frequency generally come before the main verb (except when the main verb is 'to be').

-> I **usually** visit my grandparents on weekends. Adverbs of frequency can also come at the beginning

or end (except for *ever*) -> Do you **ever** dream about winning the lottery? not: ~~Ever~~ do you dream about..

5. Adverbs of Duration – e.g.: *briefly, forever, long, shortly, temporarily, etc.*

Adverbs of duration tell us how long something happened. They usually go in the end position.

-> We didn't stay at the party **long**. We wanted to stay at the resort **forever!**

6. Adverbs of Degree – e.g.: *extremely, fairly, quite, just, almost, very, too, enough, etc.*

Adverbs of degree tell us 'to what extent' something happens. They can either *intensify* or *weaken* the meaning.

-> I'm **fairly** certain I locked the door. I'm **quite** tired. They're **almost** finished.

7. Adverbs of Focus – e.g.: *generally, largely, mainly, simply, particularly, notably, primarily, especially, mostly, etc.*

Adverbs of focus are used to highlight the most relevant parts of a sentence or clause.

-> He **generally** doesn't like to meet new people. **Simply** do what you have to do.

8. Adverbs of Certainty/Probability – e.g.: *possibly, probably, certainly, surely, definitely, clearly, etc.*

Adverbs of certainty are used to tell us how sure or strongly we feel about an action or event.

-> He **definitely** has the passion to succeed! **Possibly**, she was feeling a bit anxious at the meeting.

9. Adverbs of Viewpoint/Evaluation – e.g.: *honestly, seriously, luckily, surprisingly, ideally, obviously, hopefully, etc.*

Adverbs of viewpoint/evaluation add information or express the speaker's attitude regarding actions or events.

-> **Clearly**, we have to work harder. I'd **personally** rather go by bus. She has real talent **apparently**.

10. Adverbs of Judgement – e.g.: *bravely, carelessly, generously, kindly, spitefully, etc.*

Adverbs of judgement provide an opinion about someone's actions, including our own.

-> I **stupidly** forgot to charge my phone again. **Bravely**, he backpacked across Africa by himself.

Note: -> As we can see, adverbs in types #7, 8, 9 & 10 can be flexibly placed depending on emphasis/context.



C) Front Position Adverbs – the following adverbs are especially used in the front position of sentences or clauses:

- i) Connecting Adverbs – to indicate a clear relationship to the previous sentence:
-> The economy has been struggling lately. **However**, the job market has been improving.
- ii) Time & Place Adverbs – provide additional information about a past reference to time or place:
-> We've been working steadily on the project for weeks. **Next Monday**, we'll present it to the CEO.
- iii) Viewpoint/Evaluation Adverbs – provide the speaker's attitude towards what is about to be said or written:
-> She's been recovering faster than expected. **Hopefully**, the doctors will let her go home tomorrow.

D) Mid Position Adverbs – there are three main types of adverbs that generally go in the mid-position:

- i) Adverbs which indicate an order of events, such as **first**, **next** or **last**. These normally go in the mid-position, especially when referring to a specific time phrase within the sentence. -> I **first** met my wife in university.
Note: -> We also often use these adverbs in the front of clauses that provide instructions or lists:
-> **First**, pour the milk into a bowl, **then** mix in the butter...
- ii) Degree adverbs (e.g.: *very, extremely, quite, fully, hardly*, etc.) normally come in the mid position with the verb. They are placed after auxiliary verbs and before other verbs or adjectives:
-> He had **hardly** begun. I **just** wanted to ask a question. This pineapple is **very** sweet!
- iii) Adverbs of frequency which show an indefinite way of how often something happens:
-> I **hardly ever** go to bed after midnight. In the Antarctic, temperatures **rarely** rise above freezing.
Tip: -> Adverbial phrases of indefinite frequency (e.g.: *as a rule, on many occasions, from time to time*, etc.) normally go at the beginning or end of a sentence:
-> I like to treat myself to little luxuries **from time to time**. not: I, ~~from time to time~~, like to..

E) End Position is common for many adverbs of *place, definite frequency* and *definite time*.

- > My aunt lives just **downstairs**. I visit my hometown **annually**. Andy just graduated **in June**.
- Note:** -> Adverbs of indefinite time (sometimes, usually, etc.) are naturally placed in the mid-position.

We avoid putting an adverb between a verb and an *-ing form* or *to-infinitive*:

- > He **suddenly** stopped trying or: He stopped trying **suddenly** but not: He stopped ~~suddenly~~ trying.

When there is more than one adverbial in the end position, the order is i) adverb of manner, ii) place & iii) time:

- > I walked by someone playing the saxophone **beautifully / in the park / today**. (*manner + place + time*)
- > We arrived **there on Saturday at 6pm**. (*place & time*)

We tend to put adverbs that are shorter and more concise before those that are longer, regardless of category:

- > While I worked on my thesis (time), I lived with my parents in their fully-furnished basement. (place)
- > When he tried out for the team (time), he practiced incredibly hard with his personal trainer. (manner)

F) Adverbs with Two Forms – Some words have the same adjective and adverb form (e.g.: *I need to relax after a hard day (adj); I studied hard (adv)*). Furthermore, some adverbs have two forms, such as **hard** and **hardly**. These unique adverbs have different forms depending on their sentence position and meaning. Compare the following:

Adverb	Meaning	Position	Example
close closely	-near in space or time -near (actions or states)	-after a verb -before or after a verb	-Don't stand too close* to that dog! -They are closely related. / We work closely together.
hard hardly	-to make much effort -almost not at all	-after a verb -before a verb or at the beginning of a sentence	-He practiced hard until he made the starting lineup. -I can hardly wait until this summer! - Hardly anyone uses a typewriter anymore.
high highly	-to a higher elevation -to a great degree or extent	-after a verb -after a verb or before an adjective	-He climbed high up to the top of the mountain. -We think highly of our professor for his research. -The team is highly motivated to win a championship.
slow slowly	-not moving quickly -to happen at a slow rate	-after movement verbs -before or after a verb	-Drive slow* down this hill. The roads are icy! -The truth slowly came out about the scandal.

***Note:** -> **close** and **slow** can also be used in *-ly forms* but this sounds formal in casual spoken and written English
Other examples include: ***fine/finely, firm/firmly, last/lastly, real/really, sure/surely, wrong/wrongly***, etc.



Unit 55 – Exercises:

55.1 – Which of the positions are most appropriate for the **adverb** or **adverbial**; (1), (2) or (3)? (55-A/B)

1. He (1) got up (2) because it was the first day of vacation (3). (late) -> __
2. Kevin (1) passed his exam (2) today. He (3) had no problems with it. (easily) -> __
3. Mark was (1) absorbed (2) in his thoughts during class (3). (completely) -> __
4. Josh (1) played (2) and was praised (3) by his coaches and teammates afterwards. (courageously) -> __
5. When you see the teacher (1), be sure to ask her (2) if it's okay to leave class (3). (early) -> __

55.2 – Put the **adverb** in brackets in the most appropriate position in each sentence. Both positions are possible in some sentences. (55-B/D/E)

1. She plays _____ the piano **really well**. (really well)
2. I don't listen _____ to the radio _____ anymore. (often)
3. There was _____ a small skating rink _____. (outside)
4. _____, we can't tell you the result but we can give you an indication, _____. (obviously)
5. I _____ remember _____ reminding her to lock the front door. (clearly)
6. He began _____ talking _____ about the match. (excitedly)
7. He _____ tried to cut in line _____. (deliberately)
8. They _____ live _____ on the top floor. (upstairs)
9. We saw Charles play the piano _____ in church this morning _____. (beautifully)

55.3 – Complete the clauses on the right with the most appropriate **front position adverbs** from the box. (55-C)

In addition / Otherwise / Meanwhile / Thankfully / Instead / Therefore / Then

1. The hotel provides a computer lounge at no cost. -> **In addition**, wi-fi is available throughout the hotel.
2. It took us over an hour to get the baby to sleep. -> _____, the doorbell rang.
3. The law does not permit drinking and driving. -> _____, there would be many more accidents.
4. The due date for the assignment has passed. -> _____, I won't be able to submit it.
5. I didn't hear my alarm and woke up late today. -> _____, I managed to arrive for work on time.
6. John didn't bother taking the subway to work. -> _____, he took his car and parked downtown.
7. Mark wants to travel to Italy for his anniversary. -> _____, his wife would rather travel to Paris.

55.4 – If necessary, improve the position of the following **adverbs of indefinite frequency** in italics. (55-D)

1. I don't go *as a rule* to the office on Saturday morning. 1. **As a rule**, I don't go to the office..
2. He has been known to go shopping by himself *on occasion*. 2. _____.
3. Everybody enjoys *from time to time* being spoiled. 3. _____.
4. We meet up for lunch nearby *every now and then*. 4. _____.
5. I *every so often* treat myself to a nice meal. 5. _____.
6. I usually see her *every once in a while* at the gym. 6. _____.

55.5 – Complete each sentence with the adverbs from the box. Those in the front position operate as **adverbs of comment** and those in the end position operate as **adverbs of manner**. (55-A,B,C,E)

seriously / truthfully / carelessly / luckily / clearly / naturally / bravely

1. The police have to take any terrorist threat **seriously**.
2. _____, you made a mistake and you should tell her the truth.
3. I did my best to answer all of her questions _____.
4. _____, I get upset sometimes when things go wrong.
5. _____, he fought as a naval officer during the Korean war.
6. He was often criticized by the teacher for doing his homework _____.
7. _____ for us, the train was also late and we managed to catch it just in time.