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### Joining adverbs

Adverbs **join** a clause to what came before.

Examples: *however, then, next, besides, anyway*

Position: beginning of clause

*I prefer to go to the cinema on a Friday night rather than on a Saturday night.*

*He's been everywhere – he's **even** been to Antarctica.*

*We're **only** going for two days.*

*She's my teacher, but she's **also** my friend.*

*The people at the meeting **were mainly** scientists.*

Position: mid-position (see paragraph 10 for more details). They can also go in other places in a clause, directly before the words they modify.

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These adverbs 'point to' one part of a clause.

Examples: *also* (see 45–46), *just* (see 305), *even* (see 195), *only* (see 394),

*mainly, mostly, either* (see 179), *or, neither* (see 364), *nor* (see 364).

Position: mid-position (see paragraph 10 for more details). They can also go in other places in a clause, directly before the words they modify.

auxiliary verb + adverb

*He's been everywhere – he's **even** been to Antarctica.*

*We're **only** going for two days.*

*am/are/is/was/were + adverb*

*She's my teacher, but she's **also** my friend.*

*The people at the meeting **were mainly** scientists.*

adverb + other verb

*Your bicycle **just needs** some oil – that's all.*

*She **neither said thank-you nor looked at me.***

adverb directly before word(s) modified

***Only you** could do a thing like that.*

*I **feel really** tired.*

*He **always** wears a coat, **even in** summer.*

*Too* and *as well* are focusing adverbs that usually go in end position (see 45).

*Either* goes in end position after *not* (see 364).

## 4 adverbs of certainty

We use these adverbs to say **how sure** we are of something.

Examples: *certainly, definitely, clearly, obviously, probably.*

Position: mid-position (see paragraph 10 for more details).

auxiliary verb + adverb

*It **will probably** rain this evening.*

*The train **has obviously** been delayed.*

*am/are/is/was/were + adverb*

*There is **clearly** something wrong.*

*She is **definitely** older than him.*

adverb + other verb

*He **probably** thinks you don't like him.*

*I **certainly** feel better today.*

*Maybe* and *perhaps* usually come at the beginning of a clause.

*Perhaps* her train is late.

*Maybe* I'm right and *maybe* I'm wrong.

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## Adverbs of completeness

Adverbs say **how completely** something happens or is true.  
Examples: *completely, practically, almost, nearly, quite, rather, partly, sort of, half, more or less, hardly, scarcely.*

Position: mid-position (see paragraph 10 for more details).

Structure: auxiliary verb + adverb

Example: *I **have completely** forgotten your name.* Sally **can practically** read.

Structure: am/are/is/was/were + adverb

Example: *The house **is partly** ready.*

Structure: verb + other verb

Example: *John **isn't** happy **at all**.*

## Adverbs of manner; comment adverbs

These adverbs say **how** something happens or is done.

Examples: *angrily, happily, fast, slowly, suddenly, well, badly, nicely, noisily, quietly, hard, softly.*

Position: most often at the end of a clause, especially if the adverb is important to the meaning of the verb and cannot be left out (see paragraph 10). Adverbs in *-ly* can go in mid-position if the adverb is not the main focus of the message (for details of the exact position, see paragraph 10).

Structure: subject + verb + adverb

Example: *She **drove off angrily**.* You **speak English well**.

Structure: subject + verb + adverb

Example: *She **read the letter slowly**.* I **slowly** began to feel better again.

Structure: subject + verb + adverb

Example: *She **isn't** happy **at all**.*

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Adverbs of direction (movement) come before adverbs of position.

Example: *The children **are running** around upstairs.*

Here and there often begin clauses. Note the word order in Here/There is, Here comes and There goes.

Structure: Here/There + verb + subject

Example: ***Here comes your bus.** (NOT ~~Here your bus comes.~~)*

Example: ***There's** Alice. **There goes** our train!*

Pronoun subjects come directly after here and there.

Example: ***Here it comes.** (NOT ~~Here comes it.~~) **There she is.** (NOT ~~There is she.~~)*

## 8 Adverbs of time and definite frequency

These adverbs say **when** or **how often** something happens.

Examples: *today, afterwards, in June, last year, finally, before, eventually, already, soon, still, last, daily, weekly, every year.*

Position: mostly in end position; initial position is also common if the adverb is not the main focus of the message. Some can go in mid-position (see below). Adverbs of indefinite frequency (*often, ever* etc) go in mid-position (see paragraph 2).

Example: *I'm going to London **today**.* / ***Today** I'm going to London.*

Example: *She has a new hair style **every week**.* / ***Every week** she has a new hair style.*

Example: ***Finally, eventually, already, soon** and **last** can also go in mid-position; **still** and **just** only go in mid-position.*

Example: ***So you finally** got here.*

Example: ***I've already** paid the bill.*

Example: ***We'll soon** be home.*

Example: ***When did you last** see your father?*

Example: ***I still** love you.*

Example: ***She's just** gone out.*

## 9 Emphasising adverbs

These adverbs modify particular words or expressions in a clause, and go just before them.

Examples: *very, extremely, terribly, just, almost, really, right.*

Example: ***I'll see you in the pub just before** eight o'clock.*

Example: ***She walked right past** me. **We all thought** she sang **very well**.*

## 10 Mid-position: detailed rules

Mid-position adverbs usually go after auxiliary verbs, after *am/are/is/was/were*, and before other verbs.

Example: ***She has never** written to me. **The discussion was mainly** about money.*

Example: ***It certainly** looks like rain.*

When there are two or more auxiliaries, the adverb usually goes after the first.

Example: ***You have definitely been** working too hard.*

Example: ***She would never have been promoted** if she hadn't changed jobs.*

But other positions are possible, especially when the first part of the verb phrase is a modal auxiliary (see 344), used to or have to.

Example: ***They sometimes must** be bored. (OR **They must sometimes** be bored.)*

Example: ***She could have easily been** killed. (OR **She could easily have been** killed.)*

Example: ***We always used to** go to the seaside in May. (OR **We used always to** go ...)*

Example: ***OR We used to always** go ...*

## Adverbs of place

Adverbs say **where** something happens.

Examples: *upstairs, around, here, to bed, in London, out of the window.*

Position: mid-position (see paragraph 10 for more details).

Structure: auxiliary verb + adverb

Example: *I **have completely** forgotten your name.* Sally **can practically** read.

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When adverbs of completeness or manner go in mid-position, they are normally put after all auxiliary verbs.

*I will have completely finished by next June.*

*Do you think the repair has been properly done?*

*When I saw her, she was being well looked after.*

*This time next week I'll be happily working in my garden.*

When an auxiliary verb is used alone instead of a complete verb phrase (see 185), a mid-position adverb comes before it.

*'Are you happy?' 'I certainly am.'*

*I don't trust politicians. I never have, and I never will.*

## 11 mid-position adverbs with negative verbs

In negative sentences, adverbs generally come before *not* if they emphasise the negative; otherwise they come after. Compare:

*I certainly do not agree.*

*I do not often have headaches.*

Both positions are possible with some adverbs, often with a difference of meaning. Compare:

*I don't really like her.* (mild dislike)

*I really don't like her.* (strong dislike)

When adverbs come before *not*, they may also come before the first auxiliary verb; they always come before *do*.

*I probably will not be there.* (OR *I will probably not be there.*)

*He probably does not know.* (NOT *He does probably not know.*)

Only one position is possible before a contracted negative.

*I probably won't be there.*

## 12 mid-position adverbs with emphatic verbs

When we emphasise auxiliary verbs or *am/are/is/was/were*, we put most mid-position adverbs before them instead of after. Compare:

– *She has certainly made him angry.*

– *She certainly HAS made him angry!*

– *I'm really sorry.*

– *I really AM sorry.*

– *'Polite people always say thank-you.'*

– *'Yes, well, I always DO say thank-you.'*

## 13 mid-position in American English

In American English (see 50), mid-position adverbs are often put before auxiliary verbs and *am/are/is/was/were*, even when the verb is not emphasised. Compare:

*He probably has arrived by now.* (US normal, GB emphatic)

*He has probably arrived by now.* (GB normal)

As an extreme example, here are four sentences in a journalistic style taken from an American newspaper article on crime in Britain. The most normal British equivalents are given in brackets.

– *'Britain long has been known as a land of law and order.'*

(GB *Britain has long been known...*)

– *'... but it probably will lead to a vote....'*

(GB... but it will probably lead...)

– *'... the Labor Party often has criticized police actions.'*

(GB... the Labour Party has often criticised...)

– *'... he ultimately was responsible for the treatment ...'*

(GB... he was ultimately responsible...)

## 14 end position: detailed rules

Some sentences are incomplete without adverb complements. For example, a sentence with *put*, *go* or *last* may not make sense unless one says what something is put, where somebody goes or how long something lasts in a particular manner. These 'essential complements' usually go in end position, and before other adverbs.

*Put the butter in the fridge at once.* (NOT... ~~at once~~ in the fridge.)

*Let's go to bed early.* (NOT... ~~early~~ to bed.)

*His speech lasted about three hours.* *You sang very well last night.*

Except for essential complements, adverbs in end position usually come in the order **manner, place, time**.

*I worked hard yesterday.*

*She sang beautifully in the town hall last night.*

## 24 affect and effect

*Affect* is a verb. It means 'cause a change in' or 'influence'.

*The cold weather affected everybody's work.*

*Effect* is usually a noun meaning 'result' or 'change'. The expression *effect on* is similar to *affect*. Compare:

*The war seriously affected petrol prices.*

*The war had a serious effect on petrol prices.*

In a formal style, *effect* can also be used as a verb, meaning 'carry out to happen'.

*We did not effect much improvement in sales last year.*

For more information about these words, see a good dictionary.

## 25 afraid

### 1 afraid and fear

In an informal style, *be afraid* is more common than *fear*.

*Don't be afraid.* (NOT ~~Don't fear.~~) *Are you afraid of the dark?*

*She's afraid that I might find out.*

### 2 I'm afraid = 'I'm sorry'

*I'm afraid (that)* often means 'I'm sorry to tell you (that)'. It is used to introduce apologetic refusals and bad news.

*I'm afraid (that) I can't help you.*

*I'm afraid that there's been an accident.*