

36

adverbs

An adverb describes an action (a verb), saying how, when or where something happens.

The girl was sitting **uncomfortably** on the floor.
I'll see you **tomorrow**. Wait **outside**.

FORM

Some adverbs of manner (how) add **-ly** to the adjective. Adjectives ending **-e** drop **-e**. Adjectives ending in **-y** change **-y** to **-i**.

uncomfortable	uncomfortably	careful	carefully
happy	happily	real	really

irregular adverbs

Some adverbs have an irregular form, eg *good* → *well*.

adverbs with the same form as adjectives

early	fast	hard	high	late	low	right	wrong
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Hard and *hardly* are often confused. *Hardly* means 'almost not'. *Hard* is an adverb form meaning 'using a lot of energy'.

I can **hardly** hear you! Are you working **hard**?

adjectives that look like adverbs

Some adjectives ending **-ly** look like adverbs but are not, eg *friendly*, *lovely*, *lonely*, *likely*, *lively*, *silly*.

frequency adverbs

These describe how often something happens.

People **often** think that bats are birds, but they are mammals.

0%	10%	25%	75%	90%	100%
never	rarely	sometimes	often	usually	always

Put the frequency adverb between the subject and verb, but after **be**.

A painting **often** tells a story. What sort of films do you **usually** go and see?
Cartoon films **are usually** entertaining.

intensifiers (see Unit 35 on gradable adjectives)

Adverbs like *very*, *really*, *extremely* are used to make adjectives or adverbs stronger.

I think this film is **really** terrible. Everyone has worked **extremely** carefully.

too, very

Too means more than is necessary, *very* means a lot. Compare the meanings:

I'm **too** tired, I can't work any more.
This is a **very** interesting painting.

Too is often used with *to*-infinitive to explain why something is not possible.

I'm **too** tired to work.

well, ill, bad, badly

Well and *badly* are adverbs and describe how an action is performed.

She writes **well**. He plays tennis **badly**.

Well and *ill* are adjectives describing health.

I don't **feel well**. You **look ill**.

With verbs like *look*, *seem*, *feel* we do not use an adverb.

This fish **smells bad**. That **looks good**.

1 Decide whether the words underlined are acting as adjectives or adverbs.

- | | | |
|---|---|------------------|
| a | Some people think modern paintings are ' <u>difficult</u> '. | <u>adjective</u> |
| b | They find them <u>confusing</u> because they are not 'pictures' | _____ |
| c | They say that a <u>good</u> photograph would be better. | _____ |
| d | At least, they say, a photo does show the <u>real</u> world. | _____ |
| e | It's also hard to persuade them that the artist worked <u>hard</u> . | _____ |
| f | Some modern painting could <u>easily</u> have been painted by a child. | _____ |
| g | Artists <u>sometimes</u> make the situation more difficult. | _____ |
| h | They write explanations of their work which can seem <u>unnecessary</u> . | _____ |
| i | They may not seem to have <u>very</u> much connection with the art. | _____ |
| j | Still, if the work seems <u>interesting</u> then it is worth looking at. | _____ |

2 Complete the sentence with an adverb formed from the adjective in brackets.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| a | The play begins rather (slow) <u>slowly</u> with a scene at a bus stop. | e | The whole show was (real) _____ entertaining and the singers and dancers showed a lot of enthusiasm. |
| b | Just as you think the main characters are going to live (happy) _____ ever after, the film takes an unexpected twist. | f | This is a (true) _____ great book. Go out and buy it today. |
| c | This book is (beautiful) _____ written, but in the end the story is disappointing. | g | This is an (incredible) _____ good album, with a lot of fantastic tracks. |
| d | Mark's guitar playing is pretty good, but he sings so (bad) _____ that I just wanted him to stop. | h | Jim Carrey in the main role is (unbelievable) _____ funny. |

6 Underline the correct word.

- a I recommend this book. I think it's *too* / very interesting.
- b This is a *too* / *very* unusual film, and probably won't appeal to everyone.
- c This book has more than 700 pages, so it's *too* / *very* long to read in an afternoon!
- d I liked this film because it is *too* / *very* funny, and it made me laugh a lot.
- e What I like most about this book is that the characters are *too* / *very* true-to-life.
- f This film is *too* / *very* romantic, and it really made me cry!
- g I couldn't understand this book at all! The language is just *too* / *very* difficult.
- h There are some *too* / *very* good scenes in this film, but on the whole I didn't like it.

7 Decide whether the word underlined is used as an adjective or adverb.

a We had a lovely time in the hotel.

_____ *adjective* _____

b All the staff greeted us warmly.

c And they spoke to us very politely.

d Most people we met in the town were very friendly.

e You certainly never feel lonely in a place like this!

f The night life is also very lively.

g We are very likely to go back next year.

h We would certainly thoroughly recommend it.
