

INTERJECTIONS

Interjections are words or small groups of words that are used before exclamation points to express strong feeling of any kind.

Examples: Wow! Hurrah! Way to go!

If an exclamatory group of words is too short to be called a sentence, call it an **interjection**, and write it separately from the main sentence.

Examples: Congratulations! You've just won the lottery!
Oh, Sure! That comes in everyone's mail!
Not mine! Do you really believe that?

Note: Use the exclamation point sparingly. Overuse diminishes its value. A comma is better after mild interjections.

A period is better after mildly exclamatory expressions.

Example: He refused it.

A period is better after mild imperatives [request or command]

Example: Refuse the offer.

Exercise: Add exclamation points (interjections), other ending punctuation, and capital letters where necessary in the sentences.

1. Wow what a time that was
2. Don't run in the street
3. Stop
4. Can't you stop that irritating noise
5. Far out you really did it that time
6. Of course not
7. I thought those grapes were ripe

ADVERBS

An adverb is a word that describes a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Most adverbs will end in -ly.

Examples: The pastry chef **carefully** spread raspberry frosting over the cake.
(The adverb **carefully** describes the verb spread.)

That lamp shines **very brightly**.
(The adverb **very** describes the adverb **brightly**.)

Note: Be careful to use an **adverb**—**not an adjective**—after an action verb.
Compare the following;

Incorrect

The boss sneezed loud at his desk.
(loud is an adjective)

Correct

The boss sneezed **loudly** at his desk.

Speak slow during your lecture.
(slow is an adjective)

Speak **slowly** during your lecture.

Rule: Adverbs add to action verbs. Adverbs show how, when, where, or why actions are done. Look at the sentence and decide: Is the verb doing something or being something? If it is doing, you need an adverb; it tells how, when, where, or how much is happening.

Placement of Adverbs:

Adverbs modifying verbs appear in various positions at the beginning or end of the sentence, before or after the verb, or between a helping verb and its main verb.

Example:

Slowly, we drove along the rain-slick road.

Mary handled the china dish very **carefully**.

Martin **always** wins our tennis matches.

Chris is **rarely** late for our luncheon dates.

My daughter has **often** spoken of you.

An adverb may be placed at the beginning or at the end of the sentence or before the verb. It cannot appear after the verb because the verb is followed by the direct object the gift.

Correct: **Carefully**, Mother wrapped the gift.

Correct: Mother wrapped the gift **carefully**.

Correct: Mother **carefully** wrapped the gift.

An adverb may not be placed between a verb and its direct object.

Incorrect: Mother wrapped **carefully** the gift.

Words Introducing Adverb Clauses

Subordinating Conjunctions: after, although, as, as if, because, before, even though, if, in order that, rather than, since, so that, than, that, though, unless, until, when, where, whether, while.

Adverbial Prepositional Phrases

Adverbial prepositional phrases that modify the verb can appear nearly anywhere in a sentence.

Do not judge a book **by its cover**.

Tyranny will **in time** lead to revolution.

To the ant a few drops of rain are a flood.

Adverbial word groups usually answer one of these questions: **When? Where? How? Why? Under what conditions? To what degree?**

Do not judge a book **how?** By its cover.

Tyranny will lead to revolution **when?** In time.

A few drops of rain are a flood **under what conditions.** To an ant.

Using Irregular Comparative and Superlative Forms of Adverbs

Some adverbs (and adjectives) change form to indicate their comparative and superlative degrees. Examples of irregular “modifiers” are listed below:

Adverbs:	Positive	Comparative	Superlative
	badly	worse	worst
	ill	worse	worst
	well	better	best

Exercise:

Underline the appropriate modifier (adverb) in each of the following sentences.

Example: Their actions courageous/courageously benefited many lives.

1. The snow began falling light/lightly and then steady/steadily intensified.
2. Remember to drive slow/slowly through Devil’s Pass.

3. They were charged with disorder/disorderly conduct.
4. Edith guessed correct/correctly that she had been given the job.
5. Our accountant made a costly/cost mistake on our tax return.
6. We were more than slight/slightly upset with him.
7. Whenever a bird screeched loudly/loud, he shivered violent/violently.
8. He acted heroic/heroically when called upon to aid the accident victims.
9. The blankets her grandmother wove so skillful/skillfully were beautiful.
10. They awaited the return of their ancestral artifacts eager/eagerly.

Adverb Clauses

Adverb clauses usually modify verbs, in which case they may appear nearly anywhere in a sentence: at the beginning, at the end, or in the middle. Like other adverbial word groups, they tell **when, where, why under what conditions, or to what degree** an action or a situation existed.

Examples:

When the well is dry, we know the value of water.

Venice would be a fine city if the canals were only drained.

Unlike adjective clauses, adverb clauses are frequently “movable.” We can move the adverb clause without affecting the meaning of the sentence:

We know the value of water **when the well is dry**.

If the canals were only drained, Venice would be a fine city.

Using “good/well” and “bad/badly”

Some writers confuse the adjective “good” with the adverb “well” and the adjective “bad” with the adverb “badly.” Rule: Use the adjectives “good” and “bad” to modify nouns or pronouns: “a good time” “a bad play.” Use the adverbs “well” and “badly” to modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs: she speaks well; he hears badly.

Exercises: In the following sentences, correct the misuse of good/well or bad/badly. Some sentences may be correct as written.

Example: She no longer skates good.

Corrected: She no longer skates well.

1. It was a good time; it was a bad time.
2. It did not go good; it did not go badly.
3. It could have gone better, but it was not badly.
4. They invested their money good, so good they doubled their investment.

Avoiding Double Negatives

A **double negative** is a nonstandard form using two negatives where only one is necessary. Although few speakers of English would misunderstand “I **do not** have **no** money,” the statement is nonstandard because it contains two negatives and only one is necessary. The adverbs “barely,” “scarcely,” and “hardly” and the preposition “but” (meaning “except”) are negative and should not be used with other negatives.

Examples: Faulty: We couldn't **hardly** see the band. Their music didn't **never** reach the back rows of the stadium.
Revised: We could hardly see the band. Their music never reached the back rows of the stadium.
Or: Their songs would never have been heard in the back rows of the stadium.

Although double negatives were once acceptable in English (Shakespeare used them for emphasis), using them in your writing may lead your readers to believe you are careless. Therefore, **revise any double negatives used in your writing.**

Selected Resources

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