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**Adverbs** add information to [verbs](#). They can be used to tell us **how, where, when** or **how often** something happens. Below are some rules of correct adverb formation.

## Adverb Formation Rules

### Simple adverbs

Some adverbs may look the same as adjectives. This includes words like **hard, fast, well** and **late**. It also includes words like **daily, weekly, monthly** and **yearly**, which are used to talk about *how often* something happens:

#### Adjective

*Jerry has a **fast** horse.  
I have a **yearly** eye test.  
I don't feel **well**.*

#### Adverb

*Henry can run **fast**.  
I have my eyes tested **yearly**.  
The project is not going **well**.*

### Derived adverbs

Derived adverbs are often formed by adding **-ly** to the end of an adjective. The suffix '-ly' usually tells us that the word is an adverb and tells us *how* something happens:

#### Adjective

*He was **slow**.  
Freya **sang**. She was **quiet**.  
Ryan was **careful** with the box.*

#### Adverb

*He moved **slowly**.  
Freya sang **quietly**.  
Ryan carried the box **carefully**.*

Adverbs that come from adjectives ending in **-y** will end in **-ily**:

- *angry* → *angrily*
- *crazy* → *crazily*
- *lazy* → *lazily*

We **don't add-ly** to **adjectives** that end in **-ly**:

- *lonely* → NOT: *lonelily*
- *ugly* → NOT: *uglily*
- *lovely* → NOT: *lovelily*

*Note: Remember, adverbs add information to **verbs**. Adjectives are used to describe **nouns**.*

*Do not confuse adverbs with adjectives that end in **-ly**:*

*- The party was **lively**. (Party is a noun. Therefore, lively is an adjective.)*

## Gradable adverbs

Most simple adverbs and derived adverbs ending in -ly are [gradable](#), which means we can use more than one adverb to give extra information. We often add *really*, *very*, *extremely*, *completely*, *fairly*, *rather* or *quite*:

- *She shouted **very loudly**.*
- *The man drove **rather fast**.*
- *I opened the box **extremely carefully**.*

## Non-gradable adverbs

A small number of derived adverbs end in **-ward(s)** or **-wise**. These are [not gradable](#). Adverbs ending in -ward(s) include **upwards**, **downwards**, **inwards**, **outwards**, **eastwards**, **westwards**, **northwards** and **southwards**:

- *I pushed the handle **downwards**.*
- *The road leads **westwards**.*
- *The door opens **outwards**.*

Adverbs ending in **-wise** include **clockwise**, **anticlockwise**, **lengthwise** and **likewise**:

- *You should turn the handle **anticlockwise**. (The opposite direction to the hands of a*

clock.)

- I spun the wheel **clockwise**. (Same direction as the hands of a clock.)
- John got out of the car. William did **likewise**. (William did too.)

## Compound adverbs

Compound adverbs are formed when two words are **paired together**. This includes words like **everywhere, anywhere, sometimes, downstairs, upstairs** and **meanwhile**:

- **Sometimes** I go swimming.
- I have searched **everywhere** for my keys.
- Chloe tripped on the rug and fell **downstairs**.

## Composite adverbs

Composite adverbs are made up of **multiple words**. This includes phrases like **all of a sudden, at first, by all means, as far as** and **for ever**:

- **All of a sudden**, I felt very ill.
- I did not understand **at first**.
- **As far as** I know she is engaged.

Note: Adverbs ending in **-ward(s)** can end in either **-ward** or **-wards**:

- **outward/outwards**
- **upward/upwards**
- **downward/downwards**

Watch this video from Englishgrammarspot and learn what types of adverbs we can use and how to form them:

More on this topic:

[Adverbs of Place and Movement](#)

[Position of Adverbs in a Sentence](#)

[Adverbs of Manner](#)