

Adverbs

1. The adverbs and the adjectives in English

Adjectives tell us **something about a person or a thing**. Adjectives can modify nouns (*here: girl*) or pronouns (*here: she*).

Adverbs tell us **in what way someone does something**. Adverbs can modify verbs (*here: drive*), adjectives or other adverbs.

adjective	adverb
Mandy is a careful girl .	Mandy drives carefully .
She is very careful .	She drives carefully .

Mandy is a **careful driver**. This sentence is about Mandy, the driver, so use the **adjective**.

Mandy **drives carefully**. This sentence is about her way of driving, so use the **adverb**.

2. Form

Adjective + **-ly**

adjective	adverb
dangerous	dangerously
careful	carefully
nice	nicely
horrible	horribly
easy	easily
electronic	electronically

Irregular forms:

adjective	adverb
good	well
fast	fast
hard	hard

If the adjective ends in *-y*, change *-y* to *-i*. Then add *-ly*:

- happy – happ*ily*

but:

- shy – shy*ly*

If the adjective ends in *-le*, the adverb ends in *-ly*:

- terrible – terrib*ly*

If the adjective ends in *-e*, then add *-ly*:

- safe – safely

► Not all words ending in *-ly* are adverbs:

- **adjectives ending in *-ly***: friendly, silly, lonely, ugly
- **nouns, ending in *-ly***: ally, bully, Italy, melancholy
- **verbs, ending in *-ly***: apply, rely, supply

There is no adverb for an adjective ending in *-ly*.

3. Use of adverbs

3.1. to modify verbs

The handball team **played badly** last Saturday.

3.2. to modify adjectives

It was an **extremely bad** match.

3.3. to modify adverbs

The handball team played **extremely badly** last Wednesday.

3.4. to modify quantities

There are **quite a lot of** people here.

3.5. to modify sentences

Unfortunately, the flight to Dallas had been cancelled.

4. Types of adverbs

4.1. Adverbs of manner

- **quickly**
- **kindly**

4.2. Adverbs of degree

- **very**
- **rather**

4.3. Adverbs of frequency

- **often**

- **sometimes**

4.4. Adverbs of time

- **now**
- **today**

4.5. Adverbs of place

- **here**
- **nowhere**

5. How do know whether to use an adjective or an adverb?

John is a **careful driver**. – In this sentences we say how John is – **careful**. If we want to say that the careful John did not drive the usual way yesterday – we have to use the **adverb**:

- John **did not drive carefully** yesterday.

Here is another example:

- I am a **slow** walker. (*How am I? → **slow** → **adjective***)
- I walk **slowly**. (*How do I walk? → **slowly** → **adverb***)

6. Adjective or Adverb after special verbs

Both adjectives and adverbs may be used after look, smell and taste. Mind the change in meaning.

Here are two examples:

adjective	adverb
The pizza tastes good . <i>(How is the pizza?)</i>	Jamie Oliver can taste well . <i>(How can Jamie Oliver taste?)</i>
Peter's feet smell bad . <i>(How are his feet?)</i>	Peter can smell badly . <i>(How can Peter smell?)</i>

Do not get confused with *good/well*.

- Linda looks **good**. *(What type of person is she?)*
- Linda looks **well**. *(How is Linda? – She may have been ill, but now she is fit again.)*
- How are you? – I'm fine, thank you. /I'm good. (emotional state)
- How are you? – I'm **well**, thank you. (physical state)

One can assume that in the second/third sentence the adverb **well** is used, but this is wrong – **well** can be an **adjective** (meaning fit/healthy), or an **adverb** of the adjective good.

Conclusion:

- Use the **adjective** when you say something about the **person** itself.
- Use the **adverb**, when you want to say about the **action**.