

English Grammar: Adverbs and their Placement

Adverbs go after the **verb** which they affect.

- Bob **drives** slowly.
- Susan **eats** quickly.
- My father always **speaks** loudly.

However, adverbs of frequency always go before the verb:

- I always **do** my homework.
- Peter often **goes** to the park with his friends.
- She sometimes **visits** her mother.

There are some exceptions:

- She simply **ignored** me.
- The teacher completely **rejected** her proposal.
- I absolutely **refuse** to attend any more faculty meetings.

Adverbs *always* go after the **verb “to be”**:

- The cat **is** often noisy.
- You **are** terribly rude!
- I **am** frequently late.

If the verb has two parts (phrasal verb or aux. + main), the adverb splits the **two parts**:

- She **got** lazily **out** of bed.
- The school **was** nearly **ruined** by the storm.
- I **can** never **remember** his name.
- Anne **doesn't** usually **smoke**.
- I **have** always **remembered** their names.

There is one exception: “continuous tenses”. For example:

- He **is running** slowly.
- She **was talking** quickly.

For emphasis we can put the adverb at the beginning or end of the sentence:

- Unfortunately, I don't have any money with me.
- Usually, we don't go to church on Sundays.
- He waited at the entrance to the museum, very anxiously.

Summary

- Adverbs go after the verb
- Frequency adverbs go before the verb
- Frequency adverbs go after the verb “to be”
- Adverbs split two-part verbs
- Adverbs go after continuous tenses (no split)
- For emphasis, adverbs can be used at the beginning or end of the sentence