

# 108 Adjective or adverb? (1)

## A Introduction

Vicky: / like that song that Natasha sang.

Rachel: Yes, it's a **nice** song. And she sang it **nicely**, too.

An adjective (**nice**) describes a noun (song).

*The man had a **quiet** voice.*

*Claire wears **expensive** clothes.*

*The runners made a **slow** start.*

An adverb (**nicely**) describes a verb (**sang**).

*The man **spoke** quietly.*

*Claire **dresses** expensively.*

*They **started** the race slowly.*

We do NOT say *She sang it nice.*

We can use adverbs in other ways. An adverb like **really** or **very** can be combined with an adjective (**hot**) or another adverb (**carefully**) (see Unit 115).

*It was **really** hot in the sun. Andrew checked his work **very** carefully.* An adverb like **fortunately** or **perhaps** says something about the whole situation.

***Fortunately** nothing was stolen. **Perhaps** Sarah is working late.*

## B The **ly** ending

We form many adverbs from an adjective + **ly**. For example **politely**, **quickly**, **safely**.

But there are some special spelling rules.

- 1 We do not leave out *e*, e.g. *nice* → *nicely*  
Exceptions are *true* → *truly*, *whole* → *wholly*.
- 2 *y* → *ily* after a consonant, e.g. *easy* → *easily*, *lucky* → *luckily*  
Also *angrily*, *happily*, *heavily*, etc.
- 3 *le* → *ly*, e.g. *possible* → *possibly*  
Also *comfortably*, *probably*, *reasonably*, *sensibly*, *terribly*, etc.
- 4 *ic* → *ically*, e.g. *dramatic* → *dramatically*  
Also *automatically*, *scientifically*, etc. (Exception: *publicly*)

## C Looked nice and looked carefully

Compare these two structures.

LINKING VERB + ADJECTIVE

*Tom was **hungry**.*

*The children **seemed** happy.*

*My soup has **got** cold.*

An adjective can come after a linking verb such as *be* (see Unit 104B).

ACTION VERB + ADVERB

*Paul **ate** hungrily.*

*The children **played** happily.*

*The man **stared** coldly at us.*

We use an adverb when the verb means that something happens.

Some verbs like **look**, **taste** and **appear** can be either linking verbs or action verbs.

LINKING VERB + ADJECTIVE

*Mike **looked** angry.*

*The medicine **tasted** awful.*

*The man **appeared** (to be) drunk.*

ACTION VERB + ADVERB

*He **looked** carefully at the signature.*

*Emma **tasted** the drink nervously.*

*A waiter **appeared** suddenly.*

# 108 Exercises

## 1 Adverbs (A-B)

This is part of a story about a spy called X. Put in adverbs formed from these adjectives:  
*bright, careful, fluent, immediate, patient, punctual, quiet, safe, secret, slow*

The journey took a long time because the train travelled so (►) *slowly*. It was hot, and the sun shone (1)..... from a clear sky. X could only wait (2)..... for the journey to end. When the train finally arrived, he had no time to spare, so he (3).....took a taxi to the hotel. Y was on time. She arrived (4)..... at three. No one else knew about the meeting - it was important to meet (5) ..... 'I had a terrible journey,' said Y. 'But luckily the pilot managed to land (6) ..... ' Her English was good, and she spoke very (7) .....X was listening (8)..... to every word. They were speaking very (9) ..... in case the room was bugged.

## 2 The ly ending (B)

Look at the information in brackets and put in the adverbs. Be careful with the spelling.

- (Emma's toothache was terrible.) Emma's tooth ached *terribly*.
- 1 (Henry was angry.) Henry shouted..... at the waiter.
  - 2 (I'm happy sitting here.) I can sit here .....for hours.
  - 3 (The switch is automatic.) The machine switches itself off .....
  - 4 (The debate should be public.) We need to debate the matter.....
  - 5 (Everyone was enthusiastic.) Everyone discussed the idea .....
  - 6 (We should be reasonable.) Can't we discuss the problem..... ?
  - 7 (The building has to be secure.) Did you lock all the doors..... ?

## 3 Adverb or adjective? (A-B)

Decide what you need to say. End your sentence with an adverb ending in *ly*.

- Tell the police that you can't remember the accident. It isn't very clear in your mind.  
*I can't remember the accident very clearly.*
- 1 Tell your friend that United won the game. It was an easy win.
  - 2 Tell your boss that you've checked the figures. You've been careful.
  - 3 Tell your neighbour that his dog barked at you. It was very fierce.
  - 4 You are phoning your friend. Tell him about the rain where you are. It's quite heavy.

## 4 Adverb or adjective? (A-C)

Vicky is telling Rachel about a dream she had. Choose the correct forms.

I had a (►) strange/strangely dream last night. I was in a garden. It was getting (1) dark/darkly, and it was (2) terrible/terribly cold. My head was aching (3) bad/badly. I was walking out of the garden when (4) sudden/suddenly I saw a man. He was sitting (5) quiet/quietly on a seat. He seemed very (6) unhappy/unhappily. He looked up and smiled (7) sad/sadly at me. I don't know why, but I felt (8) curious/curiously about him. I wanted to talk to him, but I couldn't think what to say. I just stood there (9) foolish/foolishly.

## 109 Adjective or adverb? (2)

### A Friendly, likely, etc

The ending **ly** is the normal adverb ending (see Unit 108). But a few adjectives also end in **ly**.

*Melanie was very **friendly**. It was a **lively** party. We had a **lovely** time.*

Some more examples are: **elderly, likely, lonely, silly, ugly**

The words are adjectives, not adverbs (NOT ~~*She spoke to us friendly*~~). And we cannot add **ly**.

There is no such word as *friendlily*. But we can say **in a friendly way/manner**.

*She spoke to us **in a friendly way**.* If we need to use an adverb, we often choose another word of similar meaning.

*It was **lovely**. Everything went **beautifully**.*

### B Hard, fast, etc

Compare these sentences.

ADJECTIVE

*We did some **hard** work.*

*I came on the **fast** train.*

ADVERB

*We worked **hard**.*

*The train went quite **fast**.*

We can use these words both as adjectives and as adverbs:

**deep, early, fast, hard, high, late, long, low, near, right, straight, wrong** (For **hardly, nearly**, etc, see C.)

In informal English, the adjectives **cheap, loud, quick** and **slow** can be adverbs.

ADJECTIVE

*They sell **cheap** clothes in the market.*

*Back already! That was **quick**.*

ADVERB

*They sell things **cheap/cheaply** there.*

*Come as **quick/quickly** as you can.*

### C Hard, hardly, near, nearly, etc

There are some pairs of adverbs like **hard** and **hardly** which have different meanings.

Here are some examples.

*I tried **hard**, but I didn't succeed.*

*I've got **hardly** any money left, {**hardly** any = very little, almost none}*

*Luckily I found a phone box quite **near**. I **nearly** fell asleep in the meeting, {**nearly** = almost}*

*Rachel arrived **late**, as usual. I've been very busy **lately**, {**lately** = in the last few days/weeks}*

*The plane flew **high** above the clouds. The material is **highly** radioactive, {**highly** = very}*

*We got into the concert **free**, {**free** = without paying}*

*The animals are allowed to wander **freely**, {**freely** = uncontrolled}*

### D Good and well

**Good** is an adjective, and **well** is its adverb. The opposites are **bad** and **badly**.

ADJECTIVE

*Natasha is a **good** violinist.*

*Our test results were **good**.*

*I had a **bad** night.*

ADVERB

*She plays the violin very **well**.*

*We all did **well** in the test.*

*I slept **badly** last night.*

**Well** can also be an adjective meaning 'in good health', the opposite of **ill**.

*My mother was very **ill**, but she's quite **well** again now. How are you? ~ Very **well**, thank you.*

# 109 Exercises

## Friendly, hard, hardly, etc (A-C)

Decide if each underlined word is an adjective or an adverb.

- ? That new building is rather ugly.                      *adjective*  
? I'd like to arrive early if I can.                      *adverb*  
1 I haven't seen you for a long time.  
2 Why are you wearing that silly hat?  
3 Very young children travel free.  
4 The temperature is quite high today.  
5 We nearly missed the bus this morning  
6 Do you have to play that music so loud?

## 2 Friendly, hard, hardly, etc (A-C)

Complete the conversation. Decide if you need *ly* with the words in brackets.

Mark: How did you get on with Henry today?

Sarah: Oh, we had a nice lunch and some (►) *lively* (live) conversation. Henry was charming, as usual. He gave me a lift back to the office, but it was (1)..... (hard) worth risking our lives to save a few minutes. He (2)..... (near) killed us.

Mark: What do you mean?

Sarah: Well, we'd sat a bit too (3)..... (long) over our meal, and we were (4).....(late) getting back to work. Henry drove very (5)..... (fast). I tried (6)..... (hard) to keep calm, but I was quite scared. We went (7)..... (wrong) and missed a left turn, and Henry got annoyed. Then a van came round the corner, and it was coming (8)..... (straight) at us. I don't know how we missed it.

Mark: Well, I'm glad you did. And next time you'd better take a taxi.

## 3 Good and well (D)

Complete the conversation. Put in *good, well* (x2), *bad, badly* and *ill*.

Rachel: How did you and Daniel get on in your tennis match?

Matthew: We lost. I'm afraid we didn't play very (►) *well*. Daniel made some (1)..... mistakes. It wasn't a very (2)..... day for us. We played really (3).....

Andrew: I heard Daniel's in bed at the moment because he isn't very (4).....

Matthew: Yes, I'm afraid he's been (5)..... for several days, but he's better now.

## 4 Friendly, hard, hardly, etc (A-D)

Complete the conversation. Choose the correct form.

Daniel: Is it true you saw a ghost last night?

Vicky: Yes, I did. I went to bed (►) late/lately, and I was sleeping (1) bad/badly. I suddenly woke up in the middle of the night. I went to the window and saw the ghost walking across the lawn.

Daniel: Was it a man or a woman? Vicky: A woman in a white dress. I had a (2) good/well view from the window, but she walked very (3) fast/fastly. She wasn't there very (4) long/longly. I'd (5) hard/hardly caught sight of her before she'd gone. I (6) near/nearly missed her. Daniel: You don't think you've been working too (7) hard/hardly? You've been looking a bit pale (8) late/lately.

Vicky: I saw her, I tell you. Daniel: It isn't very (9) like/likely that ghosts actually exist, you know. I expect you were imagining it.