the position of adverbs and adverbial phrases

1 He walks very **slowly**. I speak five languages **fluently**. The driver was **seriously** injured in the accident.
2 I **hardly ever** have time for breakfast. Liam's **always** late for work. I would **never** have thought you were 40.
3 My parents will be **here in half an hour**. It rained **all day yesterday**.
4 I've **nearly** finished. We're **incredibly** tired. My husband works **a lot** but he doesn't earn **much**.
5 **Unfortunately**, the parcel never arrived. **Ideally**, we should leave here at 10.00.

My parents will be here in half an hour.

Adverbs can describe an action (e.g. *he walks* ***slowly***) or modify adjectives or other adverbs (e.g. *it's* ***incredibly*** *expensive, he works* ***very*** *hard*). They can either be one word (e.g. *often*) or a phrase (e.g. *once a week*).

1 **Adverbs of manner** describe how somebody does something. They usually go after the verb or verb phrase, however, with passive verbs they usually go in mid-position (before the main verb but after an auxiliary verb).
2 **Adverbs of frequency** go before the main verb but after the verb *to be*.
   - *Sometimes, usually,* and *normally* can also be put at the beginning of the phrase or sentence for emphasis.
   - If there are two auxiliary verbs, the adverb goes after the first one.
3 **Adverbs of time and place** usually go at the end of a sentence or clause. Place adverbs normally go before time adverbs. NOT ~~*My parents will be in half an hour here*~~.
4 **Adverbs of degree** describe how much something is done, or modify an adjective.
   - *extremely, incredibly, very,* etc. are used with adjectives and adverbs and go before them.
   - *a lot* and *much* are often used with verbs and go after the verb or verb phrase.
   - *a little | a bit (of)* can be used with adjectives or verbs, e.g. *I'm a bit | a little tired. We rested a bit of | a little after the flight.*
5 **Comment adverbs** (which give the speaker's opinion) usually go at the beginning of a sentence or clause. Other common comment adverbs are *luckily, basically, clearly, obviously, apparently, eventually,* etc.

Other adverbs
Most other adverbs go in mid-position, e.g. I ***just*** need ten more minutes. She didn't ***even*** say goodbye. She'll ***probably*** come in the end.

a Underline the adverbs or adverbial phrases and correct the sentences where the order is wrong.

We're going to be unfortunately late. ✗
Unfortunately, we're going to be late.
He can speak German fluently. ✓

1 She liked very much the present.
2 Mark came last night very late home.
3 The ambulance arrived at the scene of the accident after a few minutes.
4 A young man was injured badly and was taken to hospital.
5 I was extremely tired last night.
6 She's lazy a bit about doing her homework.
7 I forgot your birthday almost, but fortunately my sister reminded me.
8 We luckily had taken an umbrella, because it started to rain just after we'd left.
9 Mary doesn't always eat healthily, because she often has snacks between meals.
10 Jack has been apparently sacked.

b Put the adverbs in brackets in the normal position in these sentences.

seriously
She wasn't injured when she fell. (seriously)

1 Their house was damaged in the fire. (badly, last week)
2 Ben is at his friend's house. (often, in the evening)
3 My father has a nap. (usually, in the afternoon)
4 Julia left and she didn't say goodbye. (early, even)
5 Martin talks fast. (always, incredibly)
6 His brother died in a skiing accident. (apparently, nearly)
7 We're going to the cinema. (probably, tonight)
8 I send emails. (rarely, nowadays)
9 I've bought a beautiful new coat. (just, really)
10 Karen realized that she was going to learn to drive. (eventually, never)

LIVEWORKSHEETS