91 Adverbs

A Adverbs of frequency: how often

always — often / **frequently** — **quite often** — sometimes — **occasionally** — **hardly ever** / **rarely** / **seldom** *(fml)* — never

She **hardly ever** plays tennis now.
I **occasionally** go to the theatre.
We see them quite **frequently**.

I am **often** late.
He **rarely** works at weekends.
I have **never** been to America.

Language help

Remember that frequency adverbs usually go before the main verb, with the exception of the verb *be*. Notice the position of the adverb when the present perfect is used.

B Adverbs of degree: how much

I was **a bit** tired. (*infml*) The flat was **a little** (**bit**) small. She was **slightly** nervous.

Language help

A bit, a little and **slightly** have the same meaning and are mostly used before adjectives that express negative ideas, e.g. *We were **a bit bored**.* *I was **slightly upset**.* (NOT *I was* ~~a bit happy~~.)
A bit and *a little* cannot be used with adjectives before a noun.
*It was a **slightly small flat**.* (NOT It was ~~a bit small flat~~.)

The next four adverbs all mean 'more than *a bit* but less than very'.

The hotel was **quite** busy.
The food was **fairly** boring.
I was **rather** annoyed I missed the film.
The weather was **pretty** good. (*infml*)

We had **quite a** nice room. (NOT ~~a quite nice~~ room)
It was **a fairly** wet day.
It was **a rather** good party. OR **rather a** good party.
We had **a pretty** difficult journey.

The restaurant was **completely**/**totally** empty. I **totally**/**completely** agree with you.

We had an **extremely** interesting trip. [very interesting]
It's an **incredibly** good book.

C Adverbs of manner

These adverbs describe the way in which someone does something, or the way that something happens.

Nora had **secretly**[1] put all of the letters into her bag.

I went in and shut the door **quietly**. The curtains were closed and the room was dark, but I **suddenly**[2] realised I wasn't alone.

Penelope was in pain, and I could see she needed help **urgently**[3].

I spoke to Charles **briefly**[4] this morning. I asked him very **politely** if he could work an extra hour this evening, but he reacted quite **angrily** and walked off.

[1] in a way that others couldn't know about
[2] quickly
[3] very quickly because of something important
[4] for a short time

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercises

91.1 **Form sentences from the words.**

1 get occasionally I early up — *I occasionally get up early.*
2 me ever phones she hardly
3 have leg my broken never I
4 frequently them I at visit weekends
5 brother often me Sunday calls quite on my
6 summer saw I him rarely the during
7 office always in she the is eight before

91.2 **Replace the underlined adverb with a different adverb that has a similar meaning.**

1 The film was <u>pretty</u> good. *rather*
2 She <u>hardly ever</u> goes to conferences now.
3 The shops were <u>quite</u> busy.
4 They are two sisters, but they look <u>totally</u> different.
5 I thought the film was <u>a bit</u> disappointing, didn't you?
6 I'm afraid I'm <u>extremely</u> busy next week.
7 We <u>often</u> ask them to turn their music down.

91.3 **Put the two ideas into one sentence by using a suitable adverb.**

1 I walked up the path. I didn't make a noise. *I walked up the path quietly.*
2 I must speak to her. It's important.
3 I asked him to move his car. I did it in a nice and correct way.
4 I spoke to her. I made sure the others didn't know.
5 He ran out of the room. It was very quick and unexpected.
6 I spoke to her this morning. It was only for a few minutes.

91.4 **Change the underlined adverbs in 1–4 to make them more positive. Change the underlined adverbs in 5–7 to make them less negative.**

1 The play was <u>quite</u> interesting. *very*
2 I thought they were <u>very</u> good.
3 He's been getting <u>quite</u> good marks in his exams.
4 It's a <u>pretty</u> nice house.
5 John said the flat was <u>very</u> small.
6 They said it was <u>fairly</u> boring.
7 His clothes were <u>very</u> dirty.

91.5 Over to you

Make the sentences true for you by adding a suitable adverb, in the correct place.

1 I clean my teeth after breakfast. *I always clean my teeth after breakfast.*
2 I buy clothes I don't like.
3 I lose things.
4 I forget things.
5 I remember my dreams.
6 I speak to strangers on buses and trains.
7 I give money to people in the street if they ask me.

Now think about each of your answers to the sentences above. Do you think they are:

a) fairly typical? **b)** slightly unusual? **c)** quite unusual?

If possible, compare your answers with someone else.

LIVEWORKSHEETS