21 Adverbs (1): degree and frequency

A Some other ways of saying 'very'

All the adverbs underlined below mean 'very', 'very much' or 'a lot'. They are used with particular adjectives or verbs.

Jack was **seriously injured** in a car accident.

It's **highly unlikely** the boys will get here on time – they're nearly always late.

The children were **terribly sorry** they couldn't come to the party.

It's **vitally important** to revise vocabulary you learn – otherwise you forget it.

I love Lucy, but she's **completely mad**.

This author's first book was **totally different** to this one.

I **strongly believe** that political party is wrong about immigration.

I **absolutely love** Chinese food.

My boss has **travelled widely** in Asia.

Prices have **risen sharply** in the last year.

GLOSSARY

seriously	badly and in a serious way: ***seriously injured/ill/damaged***
injured	If you are **injured**, your body is hurt, often from an accident.
highly	very, very much: ***highly likely/unlikely***
unlikely	If sth is **unlikely**, it probably will not happen. OPP **likely**
terribly	very: ***terribly sad/sorry***
vitally	extremely: ***vitally important***
mad *inf*	stupid, but sometimes in a funny way SYN **crazy**
strongly	in a way that shows serious opinions: ***strongly believe; feel strongly***
widely	in or to a lot of places: ***travel widely***
rise *pt* **rose** *pp* **risen**	go up; increase
sharply	suddenly and by a lot: ***rise/fall sharply***

SPOTLIGHT *completely, absolutely, totally*

Completely, absolutely and **totally** are used with a range of ungradable adjectives (see Unit 19).

- ***completely/absolutely/totally*** *unnecessary/sure*
- ***I completely/absolutely/totally*** *agree/understand.*

Sometimes we use **completely/totally** with certain adjectives, but not **absolutely**.

- ***completely/totally*** *wrong/different* (NOT ~~***absolutely wrong/different***~~)

1 Add a suitable adverb to each sentence.

▶ It's / important to go. vitally/terribly/highly

1 He's been ill. _____
2 I love his new musical. _____
3 That man is mad. _____
4 I feel we should change. _____
5 He's likely to move to another city. _____
6 It's a sad film. _____
7 It was unnecessary to do that. _____
8 My gas bill has risen. _____

2 Complete the sentences with a suitable word.

▶ I absolutely love the music you hear in the street.

1 I think he's right. I completely _____ with him.
2 Smoking can seriously _____ your health.
3 I'm terribly _____. I completely _____ to bring my homework.
4 He _____ widely when he was in South America.
5 We both _____ strongly that the government should change its policy on forests.
6 I'm not totally _____ that he knows what he's doing with that camera.
7 They're highly _____ to be on holiday now – it's a normal working week.
8 My bag has completely _____. Have you seen it anywhere?
9 The price of printing has _____ sharply – that's fantastic news.

3 Replace *very* with a different adverb in each sentence.

▶ She's ~~very~~ sorry about the mistake. terribly

1 A good dictionary is *very* important. _____
2 It's *very* unlikely that he'll come. _____
3 He's been *very* ill. _____
4 It used to be quiet round here, but it's *very* different now. _____
5 A bigger flat is *very* unnecessary. _____
6 That story of the missing girl is *very* sad. _____

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B Frequency and degree

Axel Do you and Mac still go to concerts **regularly**?

Harry No, we **rarely** see each other these days. The last time was **roughly** a year ago.

Axel Oh. Why's that?

Harry I **mainly** get about by bike, and that's too far to cycle.

Axel But you still go to concerts, don't you?

Harry No, not so **frequently** – I think I'm getting **slightly** old for rock concerts. **Generally**, I listen to music at home now.

Axel Don't you miss the excitement of live concerts?

Harry No, not really. I find the noise and hysteria **rather** annoying, actually.

GLOSSARY

regularly	happening quite often, with the same amount of space or time in between
rarely	not often SYN **seldom**
roughly	about, not exactly SYN **approximately**
mainly	mostly
frequently	often
slightly	a little SYN **a little bit**
generally	usually, most of the time SYN **on the whole**

SPOTLIGHT *quite, fairly, rather, pretty*

These words all mean 'not very; to a certain degree'. **Pretty** is more informal.

- *It's **quite** warm today.*
- *He's **fairly/rather** lazy.*
- *The film was **pretty** good.*

If you use **rather** with a positive adjective, you are often surprised and pleased.

- *It's a very cheap restaurant, but the food is **rather** good.*

4 **Same or different? Write *S* or *D*.**

▶ The town is mostly industrial. / The town is mainly industrial. S

1 They rarely work at weekends. / They regularly work at weekends. .....

2 Generally, it's very quiet here. / On the whole, it's very quiet here. .....

3 He's slightly ill. / He's seldom ill. .....

4 They seldom work late. / They rarely work late. .....

5 There were roughly 40. / There were generally 40. .....

6 The book was rather good. / The book was pretty good. .....

5 **Replace the underlined word with a different word or phrase with the same meaning.**

▶ I go to the gym <u>regularly.</u> quite often

1 <u>Generally</u>, I walk into town if the weather's nice. .....

2 The students were <u>mostly</u> Italian. .....

3 There were <u>roughly</u> 30 people at the party. .....

4 The dictionary was <u>quite</u> useful. .....

5 We <u>seldom</u> go out during the week. .....

6 My family <u>often</u> get together for a meal. .....

7 I expected your sister to be short, but actually she's <u>quite</u> tall. .....

8 <u>On the whole</u>, the weather was <u>quite</u> good. .....

6 **Cover the sentences in Exercises 5 and look at your answers. Write a synonym for each of your answers, then look at the sentences to see if you're right.**

7 ABOUT YOU **Write your own answers, or talk to another student.**

▶ Something that you do frequently. I frequently go for a long walk on Sunday morning.

1 Something that is generally true for you. .....

2 Something that you rarely do now, but often did in the past. .....

3 Something that you do regularly. .....

4 Something you have seen or read recently that was pretty good. .....

5 Something that you have seen or read recently that was fairly boring. .....

6 Something that you find slightly annoying. .....

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS