

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

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

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 regularly. **quite often**
1 Generally, I walk into town if the weather's nice.
2 The students were mostly Italian.
3 There were roughly 30 people at the party.
4 The dictionary was quite useful.
5 We seldom go out during the week.
6 My family often get together for a meal.
7 I expected your sister to be short, but actually she's quite tall.
8 On the whole, the weather was quite 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