

Fine and finely

The adverb fine means 'well'. It is used in some informal expressions.

She is doing fine.

The adverb finely is used to talk about small careful adjustments.

finely ground particles

a finely tuned machine

Free and freely

The adverb free means 'without payment'. The adverb freely means 'without restriction'.

Buy two shirts and get one free.

Speak freely. (= Speak without fear or inhibition.)

Hard and hardly

The adverb hard has a similar meaning to the adjective hard.

He works hard.

Hit it hard.

Hardly has a negative meaning. It means 'almost not'.

We have got hardly any rice left.

High and highly

High is used to talk about height. Highly often means 'very much'.

He threw it as high as he could.

It is highly amusing.

Late and lately

The adverb late has a similar meaning to the adjective late. Lately means 'recently'.

He arrived late.

Have you read anything interesting lately?

Most and mostly

Most is the superlative form of much.

This is the most interesting film I have ever seen.

Most can mean 'very' in a very formal style.

It is a most interesting novel. (= It is a very interesting novel.)

Mostly means 'mainly'.

My friends are mostly vegetarians.

Real and really

In informal American English, real is often used instead of really.

She sings real well. (= She sings really well.)