

Order of Words in a Sentence

To convey the intended meaning words must be arranged in the proper order in a sentence. The following is the usual order of words in an English sentence.

Subject before the verb

The subject usually comes before the verb in an English sentence.

The dog bit the postman. (Subject - the dog, verb - bit, object - the postman)

The people rang the bell for joy.

Object after the verb

The object usually comes after the verb.

The King wears a crown. (Subject - the king, verb - wears, object - a crown)

The boy killed the spider. (Subject - the boy, verb - killed, object - the spider)

Indirect object before the direct object

If there are two objects, the indirect object usually comes before the direct object.

She told me a story. (Indirect object - me, direct object - story)

Lend me your ears. (Indirect object - me, direct object - your ears)

Attributive adjectives

Adjectives used attributively comes before the nouns they qualify.

The other day I saw a little clown with a crooked nose.

King Francis was a hearty king and loved a royal sport.

When an adjective is used predicatively it comes after the noun.

The child is asleep.

Position of the adverb

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The adverb is generally placed close to the word which it modifies.

He solved only two problems.

He never tells a lie.

He is a lazy boy.

Notes

When an adverb is intended to modify the sentence as a whole, it is placed at the beginning of a sentence.

Certainly he made a fool of himself.