

Position of Adverbs - Detailed Rules

Different kinds of adverbs go in different positions in a sentence. Here are some general rules.

Adverbs cannot go between a verb and its object.

He speaks English well. (NOT He speaks well English.)

I often visit my parents. (NOT I visit often my parents.)

An adverb particle (e.g. up, down, off, on etc.) can go between a verb and its object.

She switched off the light. OR She switched the light off.

An adverb can go in three positions:

1. At the beginning of a clause
2. With the verb (mid-position)
3. At the end of the a clause

Many adverbs can go in all three positions. Some adverbs can go in *mid-* and *end* positions. Longer adverb phrases do not usually go in mid-position.

Adverbs that can go at the beginning of a clause

Adverbs which join a clause to what came before usually go at the beginning.

Examples are: *however, then, next, besides, anyway etc.*

Some of us wanted to go on a picnic; however, John did not like the idea.

He finished his work. Then he went home.

Mid-position is also possible in a formal style.

He then went home.

He, however, didn't like the idea.

The adverbs usually, normally, often, frequently, sometimes and occasionally can go at the

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beginning or end of a clause.

Sometimes I think I should find a better job.

Often I get headaches.

Adverbs of place can also go at the beginning of a clause, especially in literary writing.

At the end of the street there was a toy store.