

# Using well

Well is an adverb. To do something well is to do it in a skillful or effective way.

She sings well.

They played well yesterday.

She speaks English well.

Well can be modified by the expressions very, rather, quite and fairly.

She sings rather well.

She plays the violin very well for someone of her age.

Well can also mean 'in a way that is satisfactory'. With this meaning, it is mainly used in negative clauses.

They didn't perform very well. (= Their performance was not satisfactory.)

I don't know him very well.

Pretty well can mean 'fairly well.'

My grandmother is 95, but she can still walk pretty well without support.

Well is an adverb and as such it modifies adjectives. Well goes before the adjective it modifies.

She was well aware of the happenings.

Kerala is well worth visiting.

The expressions well before and well after are used to emphasize that a period of time is long.

She had left well before I arrived.

Well behind / well ahead

He is well ahead of his times.

## Well and good

Well is often confused with good. Although both words have similar meanings, their

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grammatical properties are different.

Good is an adjective. It goes before a noun.

She is a good singer.

Well is an adverb. It is usually used to modify a verb. In this case, well goes after the verb.

She sings well.

A good singer sings well. (Here the adjective good modifies the noun singer and the adverb well modifies the verb sings.)

## Compound adjectives

Well is used for making several compound adjectives. These adjectives usually appear with a hyphen. Example: well-known

She is a well-known singer.

When these compound adjectives go in the predicative position (after a verb), they are usually written without the hyphen.

She is well known for her work in television.