

An Introductory English Grammar

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Second Year

Name of the Course: Syntax

The ninth lecture

10th Semester 2018-2019

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Adverbials

D. Adverbials

The positional class, adverbials, cannot be delimited with precision and is difficult to describe without enormous complications. One difficulty is that there are numerous subclasses of one-word adverbials, and each subclass has its own positions in the various sentence patterns. To illustrate, let us look at the traditional adverbial subclasses of time, place, and manner. We'll choose two examples of each class:

Time:	a. soon	b. tomorrow
Place:	a. here	b. outside
Manner:	a. well	b. skillfully

With this brief discussion you may begin to suspect the complexity of the problem of describing adverbial positions. In addition there are further complicating circumstances that we cannot pursue here. So we shall limit this description to a general statement of five common adverbial positions, moving position by position from the first one (at the beginning of the sentence) to the last one (at the end).

1. Before the pattern, with or without juncture:

*Really, you should know better.
Now it's time to go.*

Adverbials

1. Before the pattern, with or without juncture:

With a sharp ax you can do wonders.

By using a little red here, you can balance your colors.

Unless you follow the printed directions, the set will not fit properly
gether.

2. After the subject and before the auxiliary or verb:

Angelina *in her own way* was a darling.

3. After the auxiliary or first auxiliary:

You may *in this way* be of great assistance.

4. After the verb in Pattern 6 and after *be* in Patterns 1, 2, and 3:

5. After the complement of the verb (SC, DO, OC):

My brother was a doctor *for twenty years*.

Tom put his watch *where he could find it in the dark*.

They believed the man crazy *after questioning him*.

A prepositional phrase after the object of the verb may be ambiguous:

They watched the hunter *with the binoculars*.

She spied the dog *on the corner*.

In these two sentences the prepositional phrase is either adjectival or adverbial.