

Grammar S2 / Group: B

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Nouns

10 Kinds and function

A There are four kinds of noun in English:

Common nouns: *dog, man, table*

Proper nouns: *France, Madrid, Mrs Smith, Tom*

Abstract nouns: *beauty, chanty, courage, fear, joy*

Collective nouns: *crowd, flock, group, swarm, team*

B A noun can function as:

The subject of a verb: *Tom arrived.*

The complement of the verbs **be, become, seem**: *Tom is an actor.*

The object of a verb: *I saw Tom.*

The object of a preposition: *I spoke to Tom.*

A noun can also be in the possessive case: *Tom's books.*

11 Gender

A Masculine: men, boys and male animals (pronoun **he/they**).

Feminine: women, girls and female animals (pronoun **she/they**).

Neuter: inanimate things, animals whose sex we don't know and sometimes babies whose sex we don't know (pronoun **it/they**).

Exceptions: ships and sometimes cars and other vehicles when regarded with affection or respect are considered feminine. Countries when referred to by name are also normally considered feminine.

The ship struck an iceberg, which tore a huge hole in her side.

Scotland lost many of her bravest men in two great rebellions.

B Masculine/feminine nouns denoting people

1 Different forms;

(a) *boy, girl, gentleman, lady, son, daughter*

bachelor, spinster, husband, wife, uncle, aunt

bridegroom, bride man, woman, widower, widow

father, mother, nephew, niece

Main exceptions:

baby, infant, relative

child, parent, spouse

cousin, relation, teenager

(b) *duke, duchess, king, queen, prince, princess*

earl, countess, lord, lady

2 The majority of nouns indicating occupation have the same form:

*artist cook driver guide
assistant dancer doctor etc.*

Main exceptions:

*actor, actress host, hostess
conductor, conductress manager, manageress
heir, Heiress steward, stewardess
hero, heroine waiter, waitress*

Also *salesman, saleswoman* etc., but sometimes *-person* is used instead of *-man, -woman*:
salesperson, spokesperson.

C Domestic animals and many of the larger wild animals have different forms:

*bull, cow duck, drake ram, ewe stallion, mare
cock, hen gander, goose stag, doe tiger, tigress
dog, bitch lion, lioness*

Others have the same form.

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12 Plurals

A The plural of a noun is usually made by adding *s* to the singular:

day, days dog, dogs house, houses

s is pronounced /s/ after **a p, k or f** sound. Otherwise it is pronounced /z/.

When *s* is placed after **ce, ge, se** or **ze** an extra syllable (/iz/) is added to the spoken word.

Other plural forms

B Nouns ending in *o* or **ch, sh, ss** or **x** form their plural by adding **es**:

*tomato, tomatoes brush, brushes box, boxes
church, churches kiss, kisses*

But words of foreign origin or abbreviated words ending in *o* add *s* only:

*dynamo, dynamos kimono, kimonos piano, pianos
kilo, kilos photo, photos soprano, sopranos*

When **es** is placed after **ch, sh, ss** or **x** an extra syllable (/iz/) is added to the spoken word.

C Nouns ending in *y* following a consonant form their plural by dropping the *y* and adding **ies**:

baby, babies country, countries fly, flies lady, ladies

Nouns ending in *y* following a vowel form their plural by adding *s*:

boy, boys day, days donkey, donkeys guy, guys

D Twelve nouns ending in *f* or **fe** drop the *f* or **fe** and add **ves**. These nouns are *calf, half, knife,*

leaf, life, loaf, self, sheaf, shelf, thief, wife, wolf:
loaf, loaves wife, wives wolf, wolves etc.

The nouns *hoof, scar/and wharf* take either **s** or **ves** in the plural:

hoofs or hooves scarfs or scarves wharfs or wharves

Other words ending in **f** or **fe** add **s** in the ordinary way:

cliff, cliffs handkerchief, handkerchiefs safe, safes

E A few nouns form their plural by a vowel change:

*foot, feet louse, lice mouse, mice woman, women
goose, geese man, men tooth, teeth*

The plurals of *child* and *ox* are *children*, *oxen*.

F Names of certain creatures do not change in the plural.

fish is normally unchanged, *fishes* exists but is uncommon. Some types of fish do not normally change in the plural:

carp pike salmon trout

cod plaice squid turbot

mackerel

but if used in a plural sense they would take a plural verb. Others add s:

crabs herrings sardines

eels lobsters sharks

deer and *sheep* do not change: *one sheep, two sheep*.

Sportsmen who shoot *duck, partridge, pheasant* etc. use the same form for singular and plural. But other people normally add s for the plural: *ducks, partridges, pheasants*.

The word *game*, used by sportsmen to mean an animal/animals hunted, is always in the singular, and takes a singular verb.

G A few other words don't change:

aircraft, craft (boat/boats) *quid* (slang for £1)

counsel (barristers working in court)

Some measurements and numbers do not change (see chapter 36).

For uncountable nouns, see 13.

H Collective nouns, *crew, family, team* etc.. can take a singular or plural verb; singular if we consider the word to mean a single group or unit:

Our team is the best

or plural if we take it to mean a number of individuals:

Our team are wearing their new jerseys.

When a possessive adjective is necessary, a plural verb with **their** is more usual than a singular verb with **its**, though sometimes both are possible:

The Jury is considering its verdict.

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The jury are considering their verdict.

I Certain words are always plural and take a plural verb:

Clothes police

garments consisting of two parts:

breeches pants pyjama trousers etc.

and tools and instruments consisting of two parts:

binoculars pliers scissors spectacles

glasses scales shears etc.

Also certain other words including:

arms (weapons) particulars

damages (compensation) premises/quarters

earnings riches

goods/wares savings

greens (vegetables) spirits (alcohol)

grounds stairs

outskirts surroundings

pains (trouble/effort) valuables

J A number words ending in **ics**, *acoustics, athletics, ethics, hysterics, mathematics, physics, politics* etc., which are plural in form, normally take a plural verb:

His mathematics are weak.

But names of sciences can sometimes be considered singular:

Mathematics is an exact science.

K Words plural in form but singular in meaning include *news*:

The news is good

certain diseases:

mumps rickets shingles

and certain games:

billiards darts draughts bowls dominoes

L Some words which retain their original Greek or Latin forms make their plurals according to

the rules of Greek and Latin:

crisis, crises phenomenon, phenomena

erratum, errata radius, radii

memorandum, memoranda terminus, termini

oasis, oases

But some follow the English rules:

dogma, dogmas gymnasium, gymnasiums

formula, formulas (though *formulae* is used by scientists)

Sometimes there are two plural forms with different meanings:

appendix, appendixes or *appendices* (medical terms)

appendix, appendices (addition/s to a book)

index, indexes (in books), *indices* (in mathematics)

Musicians usually prefer Italian plural forms for Italian musical terms:

libretto, libretti tempo, tempi

But *s* is also possible: *librettos, tempos.*

M Compound nouns

1 Normally the last word is made plural:

boy-friends break-ins travel agents

But where *man* and *woman* is prefixed both parts are made plural:

men drivers women drivers

2 The first word is made plural with compounds formed of verb + **er** nouns + adverbs:

hangers-on lookers-on runners-up

and with compounds composed of noun + preposition + noun:

ladies-in-waiting sisters-in-law wards of court

3 Initials can be made plural:

MPs (Members of Parliament)

VIPs (very important persons)

OAPs (old age pensioners)

UFOs (unidentified flying objects)

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13 Uncountable nouns (also known as non-count nouns or mass nouns)

A 1 Names of substances considered generally:

bread cream gold paper tea

beer dust ice sand wafer

cloth gin jam soap wine

coffee glass oil stone wood

2 Abstract nouns:

advice experience horror pity

beauty fear information relief

courage help knowledge suspicion

death hope mercy work

3 Also considered uncountable in English:

baggage damage luggage shopping

camping furniture parking weather

These, with hair, information, knowledge, news, rubbish, are sometimes countable in other languages.

B Uncountable nouns are always singular and are not used with **a/an**:

I don't want (any) advice or help. I want (some) information.

He has had no experience in this sort of work.

These nouns are often preceded by **some, any, no, a little** etc. or by nouns such as bit, piece, slice etc. + **of**:

a bit of news a grain of sand a pot of jam

a cake of soap a pane of glass a sheet of paper

a drop of oil a piece of advice

C Many of the nouns in the above groups can be used in a particular sense and are then countable and can take a/an in the singular. Some examples are given below.

hair (all the hair on one's head) is considered uncountable, but if we consider each hair separately we say one hair, two hairs etc.:

Her hair is black. Whenever she finds a grey hair she pulls it out.

We drink beer, coffee, gin, but we can ask for a (cup of) coffee, a gin, two gins etc. We drink out of glasses. We can walk in woods.

experience meaning 'something which happened to someone' is countable:

He had an exciting experience/some exciting experiences

(= adventure/s) last week.

work meaning 'occupation/employment/a job/jobs' is singular:

He is looking/or work/for a job. I do homework.

She does housework.

But roadworks means 'repair of roads'.

works (plural only) can mean 'factory' or 'moving parts of a machine'.

works (usually plural) can be used of literary or musical compositions:

Shakespeare's complete works.

D Some abstract nouns can be used in a particular sense with **a/an**, but in the singular only:

a help:

My children are a great help to me. A good map would be a help.

a relief:

It was a relief to sit down.

a knowledge + of:

He had a good knowledge of mathematics.

a dislike/dread/hatred/horror/love + of is also possible:

a love of music a hatred of violence

a mercy/pity/shame/wonder can be used with that-clauses introduced by it:

It's a pity you weren't here. It's a shame he wasn't paid.

E a fear/fears, a hope/hopes, a suspicion/suspensions

These can be used with **that**-clauses introduced by **there**:

There is a fear/There are fears that he has been murdered.

We can also have a suspicion that. . .

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Something can arouse *a fear/fears, a hope/hopes, a suspicion/suspensions.*

14 The form of the possessive/genitive case

A 's is used with singular nouns and plural nouns not ending in s:

a man's job the people's choice

men's work the crew's quarters

a woman's intuition the horse's mouth

the butcher's (shop) the bull's horns

a child's voice women's clothes

the children's room Russia's exports

B A simple apostrophe (') is used with plural nouns ending in s:

a girls' school the students' hostel

the eagles' nest the Smiths' car

C Classical names ending in s usually add only the apostrophe:

Pythagoras' Theorem Archimedes' Law Sophocles' plays

D Other names ending in s can take 's or the apostrophe alone;

Mr Jones's (w Mr Jones' house) Yeats's (or Yeats') poems

E With compounds, the last word takes the 's:

my brother-in-law's guitar

Names consisting of several words are treated similarly:

Henry the Eighth's wives the Prince of Wales's helicopter

's can also be used after initials:

the PM's secretary the MP's briefcase the VIP's escort

Note that when the possessive case is used, the article before the person or thing

'possessed' disappears:

the daughter of the politician = the politician's daughter

the intervention of America = America's intervention

the plays of Shakespeare = Shakespeare's plays

15 Use of the possessive/genitive case and of + noun

A The possessive case is chiefly used of people, countries or animals as shown above- It can also be used:

1 Of ships and boats: the ship's bell. the yacht's mast

2 Of planes, trains, cars and other vehicles, though here the **of** construction is safer:

a glider's wings or the wings of a glider the train's heating system or the heating system of the train

3 In time expressions:

a week's holiday today's paper tomorrow's weather

in two years' time ten minutes' break two hours' delay

a ten-minute break, a two-hour delay are also possible:

We have ten minutes' break/a ten-minute break.

4 In expressions of money + **worth**:

£1 's worth of stamps ten dollars' worth of ice-cream

5 With **for** + noun + **sake**: *for heaven's sake, for goodness' sake*

6 In a few expressions such as:

a stone's throw Journey's end the water's edge

7 We can say either a winter's day or a winter day and a summer's day or a summer day, but we cannot make spring or autumn possessive, except when they are personified: Autumn's return.

8 Sometimes certain nouns can be used in the possessive case without the second noun. a/the baker's/butcher's/chemist's/florist's etc. can mean 'a/the baker's/butcher's etc. shop'. Similarly, a/the house agent's/travel agent's etc. (office) and the dentist 's/doctor 's/vet 's (surgery):

You can buy it at the chemist's. He's going to the dentist's.

Names of the owners of some businesses can be used similarly:

Sotheby's, Claridge's

Some very well-known shops etc. call themselves by the possessive form and some drop the apostrophe: *Foyles, Harrods.*

Names of people can sometimes be used similarly to mean '... 's house':

We had lunch at Bill's. We met at Ann's.

B of + noun is used for possession:

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1 When the possessor noun is followed by a phrase or clause:

The boys ran about, obeying the directions of a man with a whistle.

I took the advice of a couple I met (in the train and hired a car.

2 With inanimate 'possessors', except those listed in A above:

the walls of the town the roof of the church the keys of the car

However, it is often possible to replace noun **X** + **of** + noun **Y** by **noun Y** + **noun X** in that order:

the town walls the church roof the car keys

The first noun becomes a sort of adjective and is not made plural:

the roofs of the churches = the church roofs (see 16)

Unfortunately noun + **of** + noun combinations cannot always be replaced in this way and the student is advised to use **of** when in doubt.

16 Compound nouns

A Examples of these:

1 Noun + noun:

London Transport Fleet Street Tower bridge

hall door traffic warden petrol tank

hitch-hiker sky-jacker river bank

kitchen table winter clothes

2 Noun + gerund:

fruit picking lorry driving coal-mining

weight-lifting bird-watching surf-riding

3 Gerund + noun:

waiting list diving-board driving licence

landing card dining-room swimming pool

B Some ways in which these combinations can be used:

1 When the second noun belongs to or is part of the first:

shop window picture frame college library

church bell garden gate gear lever

But words denoting quantity: *lump, part, piece, slice* etc. cannot be used in this way:

a piece of cake a slice of bread

2 The first noun can indicate the place of the second:

city street comer shop country lane street market

3 The first noun can indicate the time of the second:

summer holiday Sunday paper November fogs

spring flowers dawn chorus

4 The first noun can state the material of which the second is made:

steel door rope ladder gold medal

stone wall silk shirt

wool and wood are not used here as they have adjective forms: woollen and wooden, gold

has an adjective form golden, but this is used only figuratively;

a golden handshake a golden opportunity golden hair

The first noun can also state the power/fuel used to operate the second:

Gas fire petrol engine oil stow

5 The first word can indicate the purpose of the second:

coffee cup escape hatch chess board

reading lamp skating rink tin opener

golf club notice board football ground

6 Work areas, such as factory, farm, mine etc., can be preceded by the name of the article produced:

fish-farm gold-mine oil-rig

or the type of work done:

inspection pit assembly plant decompression chamber

7 These combinations are often used of occupations, sports, hobbies and the people who practise them:

sheep farming sheep farmer pop singer

wind surfing water skier disc jockey

and for competitions:

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football match tennis tournament beauty contest car rally

8 The first noun can show what the second is about or concerned with.

A work of fiction may be a '*detective/murder/mystery/ghost/terror/spy story*'. We buy *bus/train/plane tickets*. We pay *fuel/laundry/ milk/telephone bills, entry fees, income tax, car insurance, water rates, parking fines*.

Similarly with committees, departments, talks, conferences etc.:

housing committee, education department, peace talks

9 These categories all overlap to some extent. They are not meant to be mutually exclusive, but

aim to give the student some general idea of the uses of these combinations and help with the stress.

C As will be seen from the stress-marks above:

1 The first word is stressed in noun + gerund and gerund + noun combinations, when there is an idea of purpose as in B5 above, and in combinations of type B7 and B8 above.

2 Both words are usually stressed in combinations of types A1. B1-3 above, but inevitably there

are exceptions.

3 In place-name combinations both words usually have equal stress:

King's Road Waterloo Bridge Leicester Square

But there is one important exception. In combinations where the last word is *Street*, the word *Street* is unstressed:

Bond Street Oxford Street

3 Adjectives

17 Kinds of adjectives

A The main kinds are:

(a) Demonstrative: *this, that, these, those* (see 9)

(b) Distributive: *each, every* (46); *either, neither* (49)

(c) Quantitative: *some, any, no* (50); *little/few* (5); *many, much* (25); *one, twenty* (349)

(d) Interrogative: *which, what, whose* (54)

(e) Possessive: *my, your, his, her, its, our, your, their* (62)

(f) Of quality: *clever, dry, fat, golden, good, heavy, square* (19)

B Participles used as adjectives

Both present participles (**ing**) and past participles (**ed**) can be used as adjectives. Care must be taken not to confuse them. Present participle adjectives, *amusing, boring, tiring* etc., are active and mean 'having this effect'. Past participle adjectives, *amused, horrified, tired* etc., are passive and mean 'affected in this way'.

The play was boring. (The audience was bored.)

The work was tiring. (The workers were soon tired.)

The scene was horrifying. (The spectators were horrified.)

an infuriating woman (She made us furious.)

an infuriated woman (Something had made her furious.)

C Agreement

Adjectives in English have the same form for singular and plural, masculine and feminine nouns:

a good boy, good boys a good girl, good girls

The only exceptions are the demonstrative adjectives **this** and **that**, which change to **these** and **those** before plural nouns:

this cat, these cats that man, those men

D Many adjectives/participles can be followed by prepositions: *good at, tired of* (see 96).

18 Position of adjectives: attributive and predicative use

A Adjectives in groups (a) - (e) above come before their nouns:

this book which boy my dog

Adjectives in this position are called attributive adjectives.

B Adjectives of quality, however, can come either before their nouns:

a rich man a happy girl

or after a verb such as (a) *be, become, seem*:

Tom became rich. Ann seems happy.

or (b) *appear, feel, get/grow* (= become), *keep, look* (= appear), *make, smelt, sound, taste, turn*:

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Tom felt cold. He got/grew impatient.

He made her happy. The idea sounds interesting.

Adjectives in this position are called predicative adjectives. Verbs used in this way are called link

verbs or copulas.

C Note on link verbs (see also 169)

A problem with verbs in B(b) above is that when they are not used as link verbs they can be modified

by adverbs in the usual way. This confuses the student, who often tries to use adverbs instead of adjectives after link verbs. Some examples with adjectives and adverbs may help to show the different uses:

He looked calm (adjective) = *He had a calm expression.*

He looked calmly (adverb) *at the angry crowd*, (looked here is a deliberate action.)

She turned pale (adjective) = *She became pale.*

He turned angrily (adverb) *to the man behind him.* (*turned* here is a deliberate action.)

The soup tasted horrible (adjective). (It had a horrible taste.)

He tasted the soup suspiciously (adverb), (*tasted* here is a deliberate action.)

D Some adjectives can be used only attributively or only predicatively, and some change their meaning when moved from one position to the other.

bad/good, big/small, heavy/light and **old**, used in such expressions *as bad sailor, good swimmer, big eater, small farmer, heavy drinker, light sleeper, old boy/friend/soldier* etc., cannot be used predicatively without changing the meaning: *a small farmer* is a man who has a small farm, but *The farmer is small* means that he is a small man physically. Used otherwise, the above adjectives can be in either position.

(For **little, old, young**, see also 19 B.) **chief, main, principal, sheer, utter** come before their nouns.

frightened may be in either position, but *afraid* and *upset* must follow the verb and so must **adrift, afloat, alike** (see 21 G), **alive, alone, ashamed, asleep**.

The meaning of early and late may depend on their position:

an early/a late train means a train scheduled to run early or late in the day. *The train is early/late* means that it is before/after its proper time-poor meaning 'without enough money' can precede the noun or follow the verb.

poor meaning 'unfortunate' must precede the noun.

poor meaning 'weak/inadequate' precedes nouns such as *student, worker* etc. but when used with inanimate nouns can be in either position:

He has poor sight. His sight is poor.

E Use of **and**

With attributive adjectives and is used chiefly when there are two or more adjectives of colour.

It is then placed before the last of these:

a green and brown carpet a red, white and blue/lag

With predicative adjectives and is placed between the last two:

The day was cold, wet and windy.

19 Order of adjectives of quality

A Several variations are possible but a fairly usual order is: adjectives of

(a) size (except **little**; but see C below)

(b) general description (excluding adjectives of personality, emotion etc.)

(c) age, and the adjective little (see B)

(d) shape

(e) colour

(f) material

(g) *origin*

(h) *purpose* (these are really gerunds used to form compound nouns: *walking stick, riding boots*).

a long sharp knife a small round bath

new hexagonal coins blue velvet curtains

an old plastic bucket an elegant French dock

Adjectives of personality/emotion come after adjectives of physical description, including

dark, fair, pale, but before colours:

a small suspicious official a long patient queue

a pale anxious girl a kindly black doctor

an inquisitive brown dog

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B little, old and young are often used, not to give information, but as part of an adjective-noun

combination. They are then placed next to their nouns:

Your nephew is a nice little boy. That young man drives too fast.

little + old + noun is possible: a little old lady. But little + young is not.

When used to give information, old and young occupy position (c) above:

a young coloured man an old Welsh harp

Adjectives of personality/emotion can precede or follow young/old:

a young ambitious man an ambitious young man

young in the first example carries a stronger stress than young in the second, so the first order is better if we wish to emphasise the age.

little can be used similarly in position (c):

a handy little calculator an expensive little hotel

a little sandy beach a little grey foal

But **small** is usually better than little if we want to emphasise the size. (For **little** meaning 'a small amount', see 5.)

C fine, lovely, nice, and sometimes **beautiful**, adjectives of size (except **little**), shape and temperature usually express approval of the size etc. If we say *a beautiful big room, a lowly warm house, nice/fine thick steaks* we imply that we like big rooms, warm houses and thick steaks.

fine, lovely and **nice** can be used similarly with a number of other adjectives:

fine strong coffee a lovely quiet beach a nice dry day

When used predicatively, such pairs are separated by and:

The coffee was fine and strong.

The day was nice and dry.

beautiful is not much used in this sense as a predicative adjective.

D pretty followed by another adjective with no comma between them is an adverb of degree meaning very/quite: *She's a pretty tall girl* means *She is quite/very tall*. But *a pretty, tall girl* or,

more usually, *a tall, pretty girl* means a girl who is both tall and pretty.

20 Comparison A There are three degrees of comparison:

Positive Comparative Superlative

Dark darker darkest

Tall taller tallest

Useful more useful most useful

B One-syllable adjectives form their comparative and superlative by adding **er** and **est** to the positive form:

bright brighter brightest

Adjectives ending in **e** add **r** and **st**:

brave braver bravest

C Adjectives of three or more syllables form their comparative and superlative by putting **more**

and **most** before the positive:

interested more interested most interested

frightening more frightening most frightening

D Adjectives of two syllables follow one or other of the above rules. Those ending in **ful** or **re** usually take **more** and **most**:

doubtful more doubtful most doubtful

obscure more obscure most obscure

Those ending in **er, y** or **ly** usually add **er, eat**:

clever cleverer cleverest

pretty prettier prettiest (note that the **y** becomes **i**)

silly sillier silliest

E Irregular comparisons:

bad worse worst

far farther farthest (of distance only)

further furthest (used more widely; see F, G)

good better best

little less least

many/much more most

old elder eldest (of people only)

older oldest (of people and things)

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F farther/farthest and further/furthest

Both forms can be used of distances:

York is farther/further than Lincoln or Selby.

York is the farthest/furthest town or

York is the farthest/furthest of the three.

(In the last sentence farthest./furthest are pronouns. See 24 B.)

further can also be used, mainly with abstract nouns, to mean 'additional/extra':

Further supplies will soon be available.

Further discussion/debate would be pointless.

Similarly: further enquiries/delays/demands/information/instructions etc. furthest can be used similarly, with abstract nouns;

This was the furthest point they reached in their discussion.

This was the furthest concession he would make. (For adverb use, see 32.)

G far (used for distance) and **near**

In the comparative and superlative both can be used quite freely:

the farthest/furthest mountain the nearest river

But in the positive form they have a limited use, **far** and **near** are used chiefly with *bank, end, side, wall* etc.:

the far bank (the bank on the other side)

the near bank (the bank on this side of the river)

near can also be used with east, and **far** with north, south, east and west.

With other nouns **far** is usually replaced by distant/remote and **near** by nearby/neighbouring: a remote island, the neighbouring village. For **far** (adverb), see 32; for **near** (adverb or preposition), see 30 C.

H elder, eldest; older, oldest

elder, eldest imply seniority rather than age. They are chiefly used for comparisons within a family: *my elder brother, her eldest boy/girl*;

but **elder** is not used with than, so older is necessary here:

He is older than I am. (elder would not be possible.)

In colloquial English **eldest, oldest and youngest** are often used of only two boys/girls/children etc.:

His eldest boy's at school; the other is still at home.

This is particularly common when **eldest, oldest** are used as pronouns:

Tom is the eldest (of the two) (See 24 B.)

21 Constructions with comparisons (see also 341)

A With the positive form of the adjective, we use **as ... as** in the affirmative and **not as/not so ...**

as in the negative:

A boy of sixteen is often as tall as his/other.

He was as white as a sheet.

Manslaughter is not as/so bad as murder.

Your coffee is not as/so good as the coffee my mother makes.

B With the comparative we use **than**:

The new tower blocks are much higher than the old buildings.

He makes/ewer mistakes than you (do).

He is stronger than I expected = I didn't expect him to be so strong.

If was more expensive than I thought = I didn't think it would be so expensive.

When **than** ... is omitted, it is very common in colloquial English to use a superlative instead of a comparative: *This is the best way* could be said when there are only two ways. (See comparatives, superlatives used as pronouns, 24 B.)

C Comparison of three or more people/things is expressed by the superlative with **the ... in/of**:

This is the oldest theatre in London.

The youngest of the family was the most successful.

A relative clause is useful especially with a perfect tense:

It/This is the best beer (that) I have ever drunk.

It/This was the worst film (that) he had ever seen.

He is the kindest man (that) I have ever met.

It was the most worrying day (that) he had ever spent.

Note that **ever** is used here, not **never**. We can, however, express the same idea with never and a comparative:

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I have never drunk better beer. I have never met a kinder man.

He had never spent a more worrying day.

Note that **most** + adjective, without the, means **very**:

You are most kind means *You are very kind*.

most meaning **very** is used mainly with adjectives of two or more syllables: *annoying, apologetic, disobedient, encouraging, exciting, helpful, important, misleading* etc.

D Parallel increase is expressed by **the** + comparative ... **the** + comparative:

HOUSE AGENT: *Do you want a big house?*

ANN: *Yes, the bigger the better.*

TOM: *But the smaller it is, the less it will cost us to heat.*

E Gradual increase or decrease is expressed by two comparatives joined by and:

The weather is getting colder and colder.

He became less and less interested.

F Comparison of actions with gerunds or infinitives:

Riding a horse is not as easy as riding a motor cycle. It is nicer/more fun to go with someone than to go alone. (See 341.)

G Comparisons with **like** (preposition) and **alike**:

Tom is very like Bill. Bill and Tom are very alike.

He keeps the central heating full on. It's like living in the tropics.

H Comparisons with like and as (both adverb and adjective expressions are shown here)

In theory **like** (preposition) is used only with noun, pronoun or gerund:

He swims like a fish. You look like a ghost.

Be like Peter/him: go jogging.

The windows were all barred. It was like being in prison.

J and **as** (conjunction) is used when there is a finite verb:

Do as Peter does: go jogging.

Why don't you cycle to work as we do?

But in colloquial English **like** is often used here instead of **as**:

Cycle to work like we do.

I **like** + noun and **as** + noun:

He worked like a slave, (very hard indeed)

He worked as a slave. (He was a slave.)

She used her umbrella as a weapon. (She struck him with it.)

22 **than/as + pronoun + auxiliary**

A When the same verb is required before and after **than/as** we can use an auxiliary for the second verb:

I earn less than he does. (less than he earns)

The same tense need not be used in both clauses:

He knows more than I did at his age.

B When the second clause consists only of **than/as + I/we/you** + verb, , and there is no change

of tense, it is usually possible to omit the verb:

I'm not as old as you (are). He has more lime than I/we (have).

In formal English we keep **I/we**, as the pronoun is still considered to be the subject of the verb even though the verb has been omitted. In informal English, however, **me/us** is more usual:

He has more time than me. They are richer than us.

C When **than/as** is followed by **he/she/it** + verb, we normally keep the verb:

You are stronger than he is.

But we can drop the verb and use **he/she/they** in very formal English or **him/her/them** in very colloquial English.

These rules apply also to comparisons made with adverbs:

I swim better than he does/better than him.

They work harder than we do/harder than us.

You can't type as fast as I can/as fast as me.

23 **the + adjective with a plural meaning**

A **blind, deaf, disabled, healthy/sick, living/dead, rich/poor, unemployed** and certain other adjectives describing the human character or condition can be preceded by the and used to represent a class of persons. These expressions have a plural meaning; they take a plural verb and the pronoun is **they**:

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The poor get poorer: the rich get richer.

the can be used in the same way with national adjectives ending in ch or sh:

the Dutch the Spanish the Welsh

and can be used similarly with national adjectives ending in se or ss:

the Burmese the Chinese the Japanese the Swiss

though it is just possible for these to have a singular meaning.

B Note that the + adjective here refers to a group of people considered in a general sense only.

If we wish to refer to a particular group, we must add a noun:

These seats are for the disabled.

The disabled members of our party were let in free.

The French like to eat well.

The French tourists complained about the food.

Some colours can be used in the plural to represent people but these take s like nouns: the blacks, the whites.

C **the** + adjective can occasionally have a singular meaning:

the accused (person) the unexpected (thing)

24 Adjectives + one/ones and adjectives used as pronouns

A Most adjectives can be used with the pronouns one/ones, when one/ones represents a previously mentioned noun:

Don't buy the expensive apples; get the cheaper ones.

Hard beds are healthier than soft ones.

I lost my old camera; this is a new one.

Similarly with a number + adjective:

If you haven't got a big plate, two small ones will do.

B Adjectives used as pronouns

first/second etc. can be used with or without one/ones; i.e. they can be used as adjectives or pronouns:

Which train did you catch? ~ I caught the first (one).

the + superlative can be used similarly:

Tom is the best (runner). The eldest was only ten.

and sometimes the + comparative:

Which (of these two) is the stronger?

But this use of the comparative is considered rather literary, and in informal English a superlative is often used here instead:

Which (of these two) is the strongest?

Adjectives of colour can sometimes be used as pronouns:

I like the blue (one) best.

Colours of horses, especially **bay, chestnut, grey** are often used as pronouns and take s in the plural:

Everyone expected the chestnut to win.

The coach was drawn by four greys.

25 many and much (adjectives and pronouns)

A **many and much**

many (adjective) is used before countable nouns.

much (adjective) is used before uncountable nouns:

He didn't make many mistakes. We haven't much coffee.

They have the same comparative and superlative forms **more** and **most**:

more mistakes/coffee most men/damage

many, **much**, **more**, **most** can be used as pronouns:

He gets a lot of letters but she doesn't get many.

You have a lot of free time but I haven't much.

more and **most** can be used quite freely, and so can **many** and **much**, with negative verbs (see

above examples). But **many** and **much** with affirmative or interrogative verbs have a restricted

use.

B many and **much** with affirmative verbs

many is possible when preceded (i.e. modified) by **a good/a great**. Both are possible when modified by **so/as/too**.

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I made a good many friends there.

He has had so many jobs that. . .

She read as much as she could.

They drink too much (gin).

When not modified, **many**, as object or part of the object, is usually replaced by **a lot/lots of** (+ noun) or by a lot or lots (pronouns).

much, as object or part of the object, is usually replaced by **a great/good deal of** (+ noun) or **a great/good deal** (pronouns):

I saw a lot/lots of seabirds. I expect you saw a lot too.

He spends a lot/lots of/a great deal of money on his house.

As subject or part of the subject, either **many** or **a lot (of)** etc. can be used, but **much** here is normally replaced by one of the other forms.

much, however, is possible in formal English:

Much will depend on what the minister says.

Compare negative and affirmative sentences:

He hasn't won many races.

You've won a lot/lots of races or

You've won a lot or

You've won a great many (races).

He didn't eat much fruit.

She ate a lot/lots of fruit/a great deal of fruit or

She ate a lot/a great deal.

C many and **much** with interrogative verbs

Both can be used with **how**: *How many times? How much?*

In questions where **how** is not used, **many** is possible, but **a lot (of)** etc- is better when an affirmative answer is expected:

Did you take a lot of photos? I expect you did.

much without how is possible but the other forms are a little more usual:

Did you have a lot of snow/much snow last year? (For much as an adverb, see 33.)

26 Adjectives + infinitives

A Some of the most useful of these adjectives are given below, grouped roughly according to meaning or type. Some adjectives with several meanings may appear in more than one group, (For adjectives + prepositions, see 96.)

Starred adjectives can also be used with **that**-clauses. Sometimes **that ... should** is more usual, (See 236.).

In sections B-E, with the exception of B2, the constructions are introduced by **it**. (For introductory **it**, see 67.) If **it + be ...** is preceded by **find/think/believe** etc. that it is sometimes

possible to omit **that** and the verb **be**:

He found that it was impossible to study at home =

He found it impossible to study at home.

B 1 **it + be + adjective (+ of + object) + infinitive** is used chiefly with adjectives concerning:

(a) character: **brave, careless, cowardly, cruel, generous, good/ nice (= kind), mean, rude, selfish, wicked, wrong (morally)** etc., and **fair*/just*/right*** with negative or interrogative verbs, or

(b) sense: **clever, foolish, idiotic*, intelligent, sensible, silly, stupid, absurd*, ludicrous*, ridiculous* and unreasonable*** are sometimes also possible.

It was kind of you to help him. (You helped him. This was kind.)

It was stupid (of them) to leave their bicycles outside.

of + object can be omitted after group (b) adjectives, and sometimes after group (a) adjectives, except **good** and **nice**. (Omission of **of + object** would change the meaning of **good** and **nice**. See E.)

2 **Pronoun + be + adjective + noun + infinitive** is also possible with the above adjectives and with a number of others, including:

astonishing*, curious*, extraordinary*, funny* (= strange*), odd*, queer*, surprising* etc. and pointless, useful, useless

It was a sensible precaution to take.

That was a wicked thing to say.

Comments of this type can sometimes be expressed as exclamations:

What a funny way to park a car! What an odd time to choose!

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The adjective is sometimes omitted in expressions of disapproval:

What a (silly) way to bring up a child!

What a time to choose!

Example with a **that**-clause:

It is strange/odd/surprising that he hasn't answered.

C **it + be + adjective + infinitive** is possible with **advisable*, inadvisable*, better*, best, desirable*, essential*, good (= advisable), important*, necessary*, unnecessary*, vital*** and with only **fair*/just*/right***;

Wouldn't it be better to wait? ~ No, it's essential to book in advance.

for + object can be added except after **good** (where it would change the meaning; see E below) and after **just**:

It won't be necessary for him to report to the police.

It is only fair for him to have a chance. inessential and unimportant are not normally used, but not essential is possible.

D it + be + adjective (+ for + object) + infinitive is possible with **convenient***, **dangerous**, **difficult**, **easy**, **hard***, **possible***, **impossible**, **safe**, **unsafe**. (For **possible that**, see 27 E.)

Would it be convenient (for you) to see Mr X now?

It was dangerous (for women) to go out alone after dark.

We found it almost impossible to buy petrol. (See A above.)

The above adjectives, with the exception of possible, can also be used in the noun + be + adjective + infinitive construction:

This cake is easy to make.

The instructions were hard to follow.

This car isn't safe to drive.

E **it + be** + adjective/participle + infinitive is also possible with adjectives and participles which

show the feelings or reactions of the person [^]: concerned:

Agreeable dreadful lovely* terrible**

Awful good */nice* marvellous* wonderful **

delightful (= pleasant) splendid* etc.*

disagreeable horrible strange**

and with the present participles of:

alarm bewilder discourage* excite* surprise**

amaze bore disgust* frighten terrify*

amuse depress* embarrass horrify* upset*

annoy disappoint* encourage* interest* etc.*

*astonish**

fun (= an exciting experience) and a relief can be used similarly.

It's awful to be alone in such a place.

It's boring to do the same thing every day.

It was depressing to find the house empty.

It would be fun/exciting/interesting to canoe down the river.

It was a relief to take off our wet boots.

for + object is quite common after **lovely**, **interesting**, **marvellous**, **nice**, **wonderful** and possible after the other adjectives:

It's interesting (for children) to see a house being built.

It was marvellous (for the boys) to have a garden to play in.

Note that for + object placed after good restricts the meaning of good to healthy/beneficial:

It's

good for you to take regular exercise.

(**good** + infinitive can have this meaning but can also mean **pleasant/kind/advisable**. See B, C above.)

it + be + adjective + noun + infinitive is also possible with the above adjectives/participles:

It was an exciting ceremony to watch.

It was a horrible place to live (in).

F Somewhat similar meanings can be expressed by subject + adjective + infinitive with **angry***,

delighted*, **dismayed***, **glad***, **happy***, **pleased***, **relieved***, **sad***, **sorry*** and the past participles of the verbs in E above: *I'm delighted to see you.*

The most useful infinitives here are to find/learn/hear/see, but **glad/happy/sad/sorry** are also often followed by to *say/tell/inform* and sometimes by other infinitives:

He was glad to leave school.

She was dismayed to find the door locked.

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G Subject + be + adjective/participle + infinitive with: **able/unable; apt, inclined, liable, prone;**

prepared, not prepared (= ready/willing/unwilling), reluctant; prompt, quick, slow:

We are all apt to make mistakes when we try to hurry.

I am inclined to believe him. I am prepared/ready to help him.

He was most reluctant to lend us the money.

He was slow to realise that times had changed =

He realised only slowly that times had changed.

27 Adjectives + infinitive/**that**-clause/preposition constructions

A **due, due to, owing to, certain, sure, bound, confident**

due, used of time, can take an infinitive:

The race is due to start in ten minutes.

But it can also be used alone:

The plane was due (in) at six. It is an hour overdue.

due to (preposition) means 'a result of':

The accident was due to carelessness.

owing to means 'because of':

Owing to his carelessness we had an accident.

due to should be preceded by subject + verb, but English people are careless about this and often begin a sentence with **due to** instead of with **owing to**.

certain and **sure** take infinitives to express the speaker's opinion.

bound is also possible here;

Tom is certain/sure/bound to win. (The speaker is confident of this.)

But subject + **certain/sure** + **that**-clause expresses the subject's opinion:

Tom is sure that he will win. (Tom is confident of victory.)

confident that could replace **certain/sure that** above, but **confident** cannot be followed by an infinitive.

sure, certain, confident can be followed by of + noun/pronoun or gerund:

Unless you're early you can't be sure of getting a seat.

bound can take an infinitive, as shown above, but not a **that**-clause.

bound + infinitive can also mean 'under an obligation':

According to the contract we are bound to supply the materials.

B **afraid (of), ashamed (of), sorry (for or about)**

afraid of, ashamed of, sorry for/about + noun/pronoun or gerund:

She is afraid of heights/of falling.

He was ashamed of himself (for behaving so badly)/ashamed of behaving so badly.

I'm sorry for breaking your window, (apology)

I'm sorry about your window, (apology/regret)

I'm sorry for Peter, (pity)

afraid, ashamed, sorry can be followed by an infinitive:

She was afraid to speak. (She didn't speak.)

I'd be ashamed to take his money. (I don't/won't take it.)

I'm sorry to say that we have no news.

or by a that-clause:

I'm ashamed that I've nothing better to offer you.

She's afraid (that) he won't believe her. (fear)

I'm afraid (that) we have no news. (regret)

I'm sorry (that) you can't come.

(For the difference in meaning between these three constructions, see 271. For **I'm afraid not/so**, see 347.)

C anxious (about), anxious + infinitive, **anxious that**

anxious (+ about + noun/pronoun) means worried:

I'm anxious (about Tom). His plane is overdue.

be anxious (+ **for** + noun/pronoun) + infinitive = 'to desire/to wish':

I'm very anxious (for him) to see the Carnival.

anxious + that - . . + should is possible in very formal English:

The committee is anxious that this matter should be kept secret.

D fortunate and lucky can take either a that-clause or an infinitive, but there is usually a difference of meaning. **It is fortunate/lucky that** usually means 'It's a good thing that':

It's lucky that Tom has a car.

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It's lucky that he passed his test. (Now he can drive himself to the station/take the children to the seaside etc.)

It's lucky for us that he has a car. (He can give us a lift etc.)

Subject + **be** + **fortunate/lucky** + infinitive, however, emphasizes the subject's good fortune:

He's lucky to have a car. (Many people haven't got one.)

He was lucky to pass his test. (He wasn't really up to the standard.)

is/are + **fortunate/lucky** + present infinitive is used mainly with static verbs. With **was/were** or the continuous or perfect infinitive there is a wider choice:

You were fortunate to escape unharmed.

You are lucky to be going by air.

He is lucky to have sold his house before they decided to build the new airport.

It is **lucky/unlucky** can, however, be followed by the infinitive of any verb:

It is unlucky to break a mirror. (It brings misfortune.)

fortunate and **unfortunate** are not used here but can be used in the other constructions.

They are chiefly found in more formal English.

These adjectives can also be used alone or with a noun:

I wasn't lucky, He's fortunate.

Thirteen's my lucky number. He's a fortunate man.

E **possible, probable** and **likely** can take a **that**-clause introduced by **it**, **likely** can also be used with subject + infinitive

(a) *It's possible that he'll come today =*

(b) *Perhaps he 'll come/He may come today.*

(a) *It's probable that he'll come today =*

(b) *He 'll probably come today.*

In each case the (b) form is more usual than the (a) but the **that**-clause is convenient when we want to modify the adjectives:

It's just/quite possible that. . .

It's not very probable that. . .

With **likely** both forms are equally useful:

It's quite likely that he'll come today =

He's quite likely to come today.

is/are + subject + **likely** + infinitive is very useful as it supplies an interrogative form for **may** (= be possible):

Is he likely to ring today?

possible, probable, likely can be used without a **that**-clause when it is quite clear what this would be:

Do you think he 'll sell his house? ~ It's quite possible/probable/likely (that he'll sell it).

F aware and conscious take a **that**-clause or **of** + noun/pronoun or gerund;

It'll be dangerous. ~ I'm aware that it'll be dangerous/I'm aware of that.

I was conscious of being watched =

I felt that someone was watching me.

conscious used by itself has a physical meaning:

I had only a local anaesthetic. I was conscious the whole time.

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4 Adverbs

28 Kinds of adverbs

Manner: *bravely, fast, happily, hard, quickly, well* (see 35)

Place: *by, down, here, near, there, up* (36)

Time: *now, soon, still, then, today, yet* (37)

Frequency: *always, never, occasionally, often, twice* (38)

Sentence: *certainly, definitely, luckily, surely* (40)

Degree: *fairly, hardly, rather, quite, too, very* (41)

Interrogative: *when? where? why?* (60)

Relative: *when, where, why* (75 E)

Form and use

29 The formation of adverbs with **ly**

A Many adverbs of manner and some adverbs of degree are formed by adding **ly** to the corresponding adjectives:

grave, gravely immediate, immediately slow, slowly

Spelling notes

(a) A final **y** changes to **i**: *happy, happily.*

(b) A final **e** is retained: *extreme, extremely.*

Exceptions: *true, due, whole become truly, duly, wholly.*

(c) Adjectives ending in **able/ible** drop the final e and add **y**:

capable, capably sensible, sensibly

(d) Adjectives ending in a vowel + l follow the usual rule:

beautiful, beautifully final, finally

B Exceptions

The adverb of **good** is **well**.

kindly can be adjective or adverb, but other adjectives ending in **ly**, e.g. **friendly, likely, lonely** etc., cannot be used as adverbs and have no adverb form. To supply this deficiency we use a similar adverb or adverb phrase:

likely (adjective) *friendly* (adjective) *probably* (adverb) *in a friendly way* (adverb phrase)

C Some adverbs have a narrower meaning than their corresponding adjectives or differ from them. **coldly, coolly, hotly, warmly** are used mainly of feelings:

We received them coldly, (in an unfriendly way)

They denied the accusation hotly, (indignantly)

She welcomed us warmly, (in a friendly way)

But **warmly dressed** = wearing warm clothes.

coolly = **calmly/courageously or calmly/impudently**;

He behaved very coolly in this dangerous situation.

presently = **soon**: He'll be here presently. (See also 30 B. For **barely, scarcely**, see 44. For **surely**, see 40 A.)

30 Adverbs and adjectives with the same form

A back hard* little right*

deep* high* long short*

direct* ill low still

early just* much/more/most* straight

enough kindly near* well

far late* pretty* wrong*

fast left

*See B below.

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Used as adverbs: Used as adjectives:

Come back soon. the back door

You can dial Rome direct. the most direct route.

The train went fast. a fast train

They worked hard. (energetically) The work is hard

an ill-made road You look ill/well

Turn right here. the right answer

She went straight home. a straight line

He led us wrong. This is the wrong way.

B Starred words above also have **ly** forms. Note the meanings.

deeply is used chiefly of feelings:

He was deeply offended.

directly can be used of time or connection:

He'll be here directly, (very soon)

The new regulations will affect us directly/indirectly. (For hardly, see 44.)

highly is used only in an abstract sense:

He was a highly paid official. They spoke very highly of him.

justly corresponds to the adjective **just** (fair, right, lawful), but **just** can also be an adverb of degree. (See 41.)

lately = **recently**: *Have you seen him lately?*

mostly = **chiefly**

nearly = **almost**: *I'm nearly ready.*

prettily corresponds to the adjective **pretty** (attractive):

Her little girls are always prettily dressed.

But **pretty** can also be an adverb of degree meaning very:

The exam was pretty difficult.

rightly can be used with a past participle to mean **justly** or **correctly**:

He was rightly/justly punished.

I was rightly/correctly informed.

But in each case the second adverb would be more usual.

shortly = **soon**, **briefly** or **curtly**.

wrongly can be used with a past participle:

You were wrongly (incorrectly) informed.

But *He acted wrongly* could mean that his action was either incorrect or morally wrong.

C long and **near** (adverbs) have a restricted use.

1 **long**

longer, **longest** can be used without restriction:

It took longer than I expected.

But **long** is used mainly in the negative or interrogative:

How long will it take to get there? ~ It won't take long.

In the affirmative **too/so** + **long** or **long** + **enough** is possible. Alternatively a long time can be used:

I would take too long.

It would take a long time.

In conversation (**for**) a **long time** is often replaced by (**for**) **ages**:

I waited for ages.

It took us ages to get there.

2 **near**

nearer, **nearest** can be used without restriction:

Don't come any nearer.

But **near** in the positive form is usually qualified by **very/quite/so/too** or **enough**:

They live quite near. Don't come too near.

You're near enough.

The preposition **near** with noun, pronoun or adverb is more generally useful:

Don't go near the edge.

The ship sank near here.

D **far** and **much** also have a restricted use. See 32 and 33.

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31 Comparative and superlative adverb forms

A With adverbs of two or more syllables we form the comparative and superlative by putting more

and most before the positive form:

Positive Comparative Superlative

quickly more quickly most quickly

fortunately more fortunately most fortunately

Single-syllable adverbs, however, and **early**, add **er**, **est**:

hard harder hardest

early earlier earliest (note the **y** becomes **i**)

B Irregular comparisons:

well better best

badly worse worst

little less least

much more most

far farther farthest (of distance only)

further furthest (used more widely; see 32 A)

32 **far**, **farther/farthest** and **further/furthest**

A **further**, **furthest**

These, like **farther/farthest**, can be used as adverbs of place/distance:

It isn't safe to go any further/farther in this fog.

But they can also be used in an abstract sense:

Mr A said that these toy pistols should not be on sale.

Mr B went further and said that no toy pistols should be sold.

Mr C went furthest of all and said that no guns of any kind should be sold.

B **far**: restrictions on use

far in the comparative and superlative can be used quite freely:

He travelled further than we expected.

far in the positive form is used chiefly in the negative and interrogative:

How far can you see? ~ I can't see far.

In the affirmative **a long way** is more usual than **far**, and **a long way away** is more usual than **far away**:

They sailed a long way. He lives a long way away.

But **very far away** is possible, and so is **so/quite/too + far** and **far + enough**:

They walked so far that... They walked too far.

We've gone far enough.

far can be used with an abstract meaning;

The new law doesn't go far enough.

You've gone too far! (You've been too insulting/overbearing/insolent etc.)

far, adverb of degree, is used with comparatives or with **too/so + positive forms**:

She swims far better than I do. He drinks far too much.

33 **much**, **more**, **most**

A **more** and **most** can be used fairly freely:

You should ride more. I use this room most.

But **much**, in the positive form, has a restricted use.

B **much** meaning **a lot** can modify negative verbs:

He doesn't ride much nowadays.

In the interrogative **much** is chiefly used with **how**. In questions without **how**, **much** is possible but **a lot** is more usual:

How much has he ridden? Has he ridden a lot/much?

In the affirmative **as/so/too** + **much** is possible. Otherwise **a lot/ a good deal/a great deal** is

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preferable:

He shouts so much that... I talk too much.

But *He rides a lot/a great deal.*

C **very much** meaning **greatly** can be used more widely in the affirmative. We can use it with *blame, praise, thank* and with a number of verbs concerned with feelings: *admire, amuse, approve, dislike, distress, enjoy, impress, like, object, shock, surprise* etc.:

Thank you very much. They admired him very much.

She objects very much to the noise they make.

much (= **greatly**), with or without **very**, can be used with the participles *admired, amused, disliked, distressed, impressed, liked, shocked, struck, upset*:

He was (very) much admired.

She was (very) much impressed by their good manners.

D **much** meaning a lot can modify comparative or superlative adjectives and adverbs:

much better much the best much more quickly

much too can be used with positive forms:

He spoke much too fast.

E **most** placed before an adjective or adverb can mean very. It is mainly used here with adjectives/adverbs of two or more syllables:

He was most apologetic. She behaved most generously. (See 21 C.)

34 Constructions with comparisons (see also 341)

When the same verb is required in both clauses we normally use an auxiliary for the second verb (see 22).

A With the positive form we use **as ... as** with an affirmative verb, and **as/so ... as** with a negative verb:

He worked as slowly as he dared.

He doesn't snore as/so loudly as you do.

It didn't take as/so long as I expected.

B With the comparative form we use **than**:

He eats more quickly than I do/than me.

He played better than he had ever played.

They arrived earlier than I expected.

the + comparative . . . **the** + comparative is also possible:

The earlier you start the sooner you'll be back.

C With the superlative it is possible to use **of** + noun:

He went (the) furthest of the explorers.

But this construction is not very common and such a sentence would normally be expressed by a comparative, as shown above. A superlative (without **the**) + **of all** is quite common, but **all** here often refers to other actions by the same subject:

He likes swimming best of all. (better than he likes anything else) of all can then be omitted.

D For comparisons with **like** and **as**, see 21 H, I.

Position

35 Adverbs of manner

A Adverbs of manner come after the verb:

She danced beautifully

or after the object when there is one:

He gave her the money reluctantly. They speak English well.

Do not put an adverb between verb and object.

B When we have verb + preposition + object, the adverb can be either before the preposition or

after the object:

He looked at me suspiciously or He looked suspiciously at me.

But if the object contains a number of words we put the adverb before the preposition:

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He looked suspiciously at everyone who got off the plane.

C Similarly with verb + object sentences the length of the object affects the position of the adverb. If the object is short, we have verb + object + adverb, as shown in B above. But if the object is long we usually put the adverb before the verb:

She carefully picked up all the bits of broken glass.

He angrily denied that he had stolen the documents.

They secretly decided to leave the town.

D Note that if an adverb is placed after a clause or a phrase, it is normally considered to modify

the verb in that clause/phrase. If, therefore, we move *secretly* to the end of the last example above, we change the meaning:

They secretly decided . . . (The decision was secret.)

They decided to leave the town secretly. (The departure was to be secret.)

E Adverbs concerned with character and intelligence, **foolishly**, **generously**, **kindly**, **stupidly** etc., when placed before a verb, indicate that the action was foolish/kind/generous etc.:

I foolishly forgot my passport. He generously paid for us all.

He kindly waited for me. Would you kindly wait?

Note that we could also express such ideas by:

It was foolish of me to forget.

It was kind of him to wait.

Would you be kind enough to wait? (See 252.)

The adverb can come after the verb or after verb + object, but the meaning then changes:

He spoke kindly = His voice and words were kind

Is not the same as It was kind of him to speak to us.

He paid us generously = He paid more than the usual rate

is not the same as It was generous of him to pay us. Note the difference between:

He answered the questions foolishly (His answers were foolish) *and*
He foolishly answered the questions. (Answering was foolish./It was foolish of him to answer at all.)

F badly and well can be used as adverbs of manner or degree. As adverbs of manner they come after an active verb, after the object or before the past participle in a passive verb:

He behaved badly. He read well.

He paid her badly. She speaks French well.

She was badly paid. The trip was well organised.

badly as an adverb of degree usually comes after the object or before, the verb or past participle:

The door needs a coat of paint badly/The door badly needs a coat of paint.

He was badly injured in the last match.

well (degree) and **well** (manner) have the same position rules;

I'd like the steak well done.

He knows the town well.

Shake the bottle well.

The children were well wrapped up.

The meaning of **well** may depend on its position.

Note the difference between:

You know well that I can't drive (There can be no doubt in your ... mind about this) *and*

You know that I can't drive well. (I'm not a good driver.)

well can be placed after **may/might** and **could** to emphasise the probability of an action:

He may well refuse = It is quite likely that he will refuse. (For may/might as well, see 288.)

G somehow, anyhow

somehow (= in some way or other) can be placed in the front position or after a verb without object or after the object:

Somehow they managed. They managed somehow.

They raised the money somehow.

anyhow as an adverb of manner is not common. But it is often used to mean 'in any case/anyway'. (See 327.)

36 Adverbs of place

away, everywhere, here, nowhere, somewhere, there etc.

A If there is no object, these adverbs are usually placed after the verb:

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She went away. He lives abroad. Bill is upstairs.

But they come after verb + object or verb + preposition + object:

She sent him away. I looked for it everywhere.

(But see chapter 38 for verb + adverb combinations such as *pick up, put down* etc.)

Adverb phrases, formed of preposition + noun/pronoun/adverb, follow the above position rules:

The parrot sat on a perch. He stood in the doorway.

He lives near me.

But see also E below.

B somewhere, anywhere follow the same basic rules as **some** and **any**:

I've seen that man somewhere.

Can you see my key anywhere? ~ No. I can't see it anywhere.

Are you going anywhere? (ordinary question) but

Are you going somewhere? (I assume that you are.)

nowhere, however, is not normally used in this position except in the expression **to get nowhere** (= to achieve nothing/to make no progress):

Threatening people will get you nowhere. (You'll gain no advantage by threatening people.)

But it can be used in short answers:

Where are you going? ~ Nowhere. (I'm not going anywhere.)

It can also, in formal English, be placed at the beginning of a sentence and is then followed by an inverted verb:

Nowhere will you find better roses than these. (See 45.)

C here, there can be followed by be/come/go + noun subject:

Here's Tom. There's Ann. Here comes the train.

There goes our bus.

here and **there** used as above carry more stress than **here/there** placed after the verb.

There is also usually a difference in meaning. *Tom is here* means he is in this room/building/town etc. But *Here's Tom* implies that he has just appeared or that we have just found him. *Tom comes here* means that it is his habit to come to this place, but *Here comes Tom* implies that he is just arriving/has just arrived.

If the subject is a personal pronoun, it precedes the verb in the usual way:

There he is. Here I am. Here it comes.

But **someone** and **something** follow the verb:

There's someone who can help you.

Note that the same sentence, spoken without stress on There, would mean that a potential helper exists. (See 117.)

D Someone phoning a friend may introduce himself/herself by name + **here**:

ANN (on phone): *Is that you, Tom? Ann here* or *This is Ann.*

She must not say *Ann is here* or *Here is Ann.*

E The adverbs **away** (= off), **down**, **in**, **off**, **out**, **over**, **round**, **up** etc. can be followed by a verb

of motion + a noun subject:

Away went the runners.

Down fell a dozen apples.

Out sprang the cuckoo.

Round and round flew the plane.

But if the subject is a pronoun it is placed before the verb:

Away they went. Round and round it flew.

There is more drama in this order than in subject + verb + adverb but no difference in

meaning.

F In written English adverb phrases introduced by prepositions (*down, from, in, on, over, out of,*

round, up etc.) can be followed by verbs indicating position (*crouch, hang, lie, sit, stand* etc.), by verbs of motion, by *be born, die, live* and sometimes other verbs:

From the rafters hung strings of onions.

In the doorway stood a man with a gun.

On a perch beside him sat a blue parrot.

Over the wall came a shower of stones.

The first three of these examples could also be expressed by a participle and the verb *be*:

Hanging from the rafters were strings of onions.

Standing in the doorway was a man with a gun.

Sitting on a perch beside him was a blue parrot.

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But a participle could not be used with the last example unless the shower of stones lasted for some

time.

37 Adverbs of time

A **afterwards, eventually, lately, now, recently, soon, then, today, tomorrow** etc. and adverb phrases of time: **at once, since then, till** (6.00 etc.)

These are usually placed at the very beginning or at the very end of the clause, i.e. in front position or end position. End position is usual with imperatives and phrases with **till**:

Eventually he came/He came eventually.

Then we went home/We went home then.

Write today. I'll wait till tomorrow.

(For **lately, recently**, see also 185.)

With compound tenses, **afterwards, eventually, lately, now, recently, soon** can come after the auxiliary:

We 'll soon be there.

B **before, early, immediately** and **late** come at the end of the clause:

He came late. I'll go immediately.

But **before** and **immediately**, used as conjunctions, are placed at the beginning of the clause:

Immediately the rain stops we'll set out.

C **since** and **ever since** are used with perfect tenses (see 187 D).

since can come after the auxiliary or in end position after a negative or interrogative verb; **ever since** (adverb) in end position. Phrases and clauses with **since** and **ever since** are usually in end position, though front position is possible:

He's been in bed since his accident/since he broke his leg.

D **yet** and **still** (adverbs of time)

yet is normally placed after verb or after verb + object:

He hasn't finished (his breakfast) yet.

But if the object consists of a large number of words, **yet** can be placed before the verb:

He hasn't yet applied for the job we told him about.

still is placed after the verb be but before other verbs:

She is still in bed.

yet means 'up to the time of speaking'. It is chiefly used with the negative or interrogative, **still** emphasizes that the action continues. It is chiefly used with the affirmative or interrogative, but can be used with the negative to emphasize the continuance of a negative action:

He still doesn't understand. (The negative action of 'not understanding' continues.)

He doesn't understand yet. (The positive action of 'understanding' hasn't yet started.)

When stressed, **still** and **yet** express surprise, irritation or impatience. Both words can also be conjunctions (see 327).

E **just**, as an adverb of time, is used with compound tenses:

I'm just coming. (See also 183.)

(For Just as an adverb of degree, see 41.)

38 Adverbs of frequency

(a) **always, continually, frequently, occasionally, often, once, twice, periodically, repeatedly, sometimes, usually** etc.

(b) **ever, hardly ever, never, rarely, scarcely ever, seldom**

A Adverbs in both the above groups are normally placed:

1 After the simple tenses of to be:

He is always in time for meals.

2 Before the simple tenses of all other verbs:

They sometimes stay up all night.

3 With compound tenses, they are placed after the first auxiliary, or, with interrogative verbs, after auxiliary + subject:

He can never understand.

You have often been told not to do that. Have you ever ridden a camel? Exceptions

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(a) used to and have to prefer the adverb in front of them:

You hardly ever have to remind him; he always remembers.

(b) Frequency adverbs are often placed before auxiliaries when these are used alone, in additions to remarks or in answers to questions:

Can you park your car near the shops? - Yes, I usually can.

I know I should take exercise, but I never do.

and when, in a compound verb, the auxiliary is stressed:

I never 'can remember. She hardly ever 'has met him.

Similarly when do is added for emphasis:

I always do arrive in time!

But emphasis can also be given by stressing the frequency adverb and leaving it in its usual position after the auxiliary:

You should 'always check your oil before starting.

B Adverbs in group (a) above can also be put at the beginning or end of a sentence or clause, Exceptions

always is rarely found at the beginning of a sentence/clause except with imperatives.

often, if put at the end, normally requires very or quite:

Often he walked. He walked quite often.

C Adverbs in group (b) above, **hardly ever, never, rarely** etc. (but not ever alone), can also be

put at the beginning of a sentence, but inversion of the following main verb then becomes necessary:

Hardly/Scarcely ever did they manage to meet unobserved. (For hardly, barely, scarcely, see 44,) **hardly/scarcely ever, never, rarely** and **seldom** are not used with negative verbs.

D never, ever

never is chiefly used with an affirmative verb, never with a negative. It normally means 'at no time':

He never saw her again. I've never eaten snails. They never eat meat. (habit) I've never had a better/light. (For never + comparative, see 21 C.) never + affirmative can sometimes replace an ordinary negative:

I waited but he never fumed up. (He didn't turn up.)

never + interrogative can be used to express the speaker's surprise at the non-performance of an action:

Has he never been to Japan? I'm surprised, because his wife is Japanese.

ever means 'at any time' and is chiefly used in the interrogative:

Has he ever marched in a demonstration? ~ No, he never has.

ever can be used with a negative verb and, especially with compound tenses, can often replace never + affirmative:

I haven't ever eaten snails.

This use of ever is less common with simple tenses.

ever + affirmative is possible in comparisons (see 21 C) and with suppositions and expressions of doubt:

/ don't suppose he ever writes to his mother. (For hardly/scarcely + ever, see A-C above. For ever after how etc., see, 85.)

39 Order of adverbs and adverb phrases of manner, place and time when they occur in the same sentence

Expressions of manner usually precede expressions of place:

He climbed awkwardly out of the window.

He'd study happily anywhere.

But away, back, down, forward, home, in, off, on, out, round and up usually precede adverbs of manner:

He walked away sadly. She looked back anxiously.

They went home quietly. They rode on confidently. (See also 36 E.)

here and there do the same except with the adverbs hard, well, badly: He stood there silently but They work harder here. Time expressions can follow expressions of manner and place:

They worked hard in the garden today.

He lived there happily for a year. But they can also be in front position:

Every day he queued patiently at the bus stop.

40 Sentence adverbs

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These modify the whole sentence/clause and normally express the speaker's/narrator's

opinion.

A Adverbs expressing degrees of certainty

(a) actually (= in fact/really), apparently, certainly, clearly, evidently, obviously, presumably, probably, undoubtedly

(b) definitely

(c) perhaps, possibly, surely Adverbs in group (a) above can be placed after be:

He is obviously intelligent. before simple tenses of other verbs:

They certainly work hard. He actually lives next door. after the first auxiliary in a compound verb:

They have presumably sold their house.

at the beginning or at the end of a sentence or clause:

Apparently he knew the town well.

He knew the town well apparently.

definitely can be used in the above positions but is less usual at the beginning of a sentence.

perhaps and possibly are chiefly used in front position, though the end position is possible.

surely is normally placed at the beginning or end, though it can also be , next to the verb. It is used chiefly in questions:

Surely you could pay £1 ? You could pay £1, surely? Note that though the adjectives sure and certain mean more or less the same, the adverbs differ in meaning. certainly - definitely:

He was certainly there; there is no doubt about it. But surely indicates that the speaker is not quite sure that the statement which follows is true. He thinks it is, but wants reassurance.

Surely he was there? (I fee! almost sure that he was.)

B Other sentence adverbs

admittedly, (unfortunately, frankly, honestly*, (un)luckily, naturally*, officially* etc- are usually

in the front position though the end position is possible. They are normally separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma. Starred adverbs can also be adverbs of manner.

Honestly, Tom didn't geS the money. (Sentence adverb, honestly

here means 'truthfully'. The speaker is assuring us that Tom didn't get the money.)

Tom didn't get the money honestly (adverb of manner) = Tom got the money dishonestly.

41 Adverbs of degree

absolutely, almost, barely, completely, enough, entirely, -><< extremely, fairly, far, hardly, just,

much, nearly, only, quite,

rather, really, scarcely, so, too, very etc.

For (a) little, see 5 D; for fairly and rather, see 42; for hardly, scarcely, barely, see 44; for quite, see 43.)

An adverb of degree modifies an adjective or another adverb, it is placed before the adjective or adverb:

You are absolutely right. I'm almost ready. :y But enough follows its adjective or adverb:

The box isn't big enough. He didn't work quickly enough. (See also 252 B.)

far requires a comparative, or too + positive:

If is far better to say nothing. He drives far too fast.

could replace far here. It can also be used with a superlative:
solution is much the best.

C The following adverbs of degree can also modify verbs:

almost, barely, enough, hardly, just, (a) little, much, nearly, quite, rather, really and scarcely All except much are then placed before the main verb, like adverbs of frequency (see 38).

He almost/nearly fell. I am just going.

Tom didn't like it much but I really enjoyed it. (For much, see 33. For (a) little, see 5 D.)

D only can also modify verbs. In theory it is placed next to the word to which it applies, preceding verbs, adjectives and adverbs and preceding or following nouns and pronouns:

(a) He had only six apples, (not more than six)

(b) He only lent the car. (He didn't give it.)

(c) He lent the car to me only. (not to anyone else)

(d) I believe only half of what he said. But in spoken English people usually put it before the verb, obtaining the required meaning by stressing the word to which the only applies:

He only had 'six apples is the same as (a) above. He only lent the car to 'me is the same as

(c) above. / only believe 'hat/etc, is the same as (d) above E just, like only, should precede the word it qualifies:

I'll buy just one. I had just enough money. It can also be placed immediately before the

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verb:

I'll just buy one. I just had enough money. But sometimes this change of order would change the meaning:

Just sign here means This is all you have to do. Sign just here means Sign in this particular spot.

fairly, rather, quite, hardly etc.

42 fairly and rather

A Both can mean 'moderately', but fairly is chiefly used with 'favourable adjectives and adverbs

(bravely, good, nice, well etc.), while rather is chiefly used in this sense before 'unfavourable' adjectives and adverbs (bad, stupidly, ugly etc.):

Tom is fairly clever, but Peter is rather stupid.

I walk fairly fast but Ann walks rather slowly. Both can be used similarly with participles:

He was fairly relaxed; she was rather tense.

a fairly interesting film a rather boring book The indefinite article, if required, precedes fairly but can come before or after rather:

a fairly light box a rather heavy box/rather a heavy box With adjectives/adverbs such as fast, slow, thin, thick, hot, cold etc., which are not in themselves either 'favourable' or

'unfavourable', the speaker can express approval by using fairly and disapproval by using

rather: This soup is fairly hot implies that the speaker likes hot soup, while This soup is rather hot implies that it is a little too hot for him.

it rather can be used before alike, like, similar, different etc. and before comparatives. It then means 'a little' or 'slightly':

Siamese cats are rather like dogs in some ways.

The weather was rather worse than I had expected. rather is possible with certain nouns: disappointment, disadvantage, nuisance, pity, shame and sometimes joke:

It's rather a nuisance (= a little inconvenient) that we can't park here.

It's rather a shame (= a little unfair) that he has to work on Sundays. fairly cannot be used in these ways.

rather can be used before certain 'favourable' adjectives/adverbs such as amusing, clever, good, pretty, well but its meaning then changes; it becomes nearly equivalent to very, and the idea of disapproval vanishes: She is rather clever is nearly the same as She is very clever.

rather used in this way is obviously much more complimentary than fairly. For example the expression If it is a fairly good play would, if anything, discourage others from going to see it. But it is rather a good play is definitely a recommendation. Occasionally rather used in this way conveys the idea of surprise:

/ I suppose the house was filthy. - No, as a matter of fact it was rather clean.

rather can also be used before enjoy, like and sometimes before dislike, object and some similar verbs:

/ I rather like the smell of petrol. He rather enjoys queueing. rather can be used in short answers to questions with the above verbs:

Do you like him? - Yes I do, rather.

rather + like/enjoy is often used to express a liking which is a surprise to others or to the speaker himself- But it can also be used to strengthen the verb: / I rather like Tom implies more interest than I like Tom.

(For would rather, see 297, 298.)

quite; This is a confusing word because it has two meanings.

It means 'completely' when it is used with a word or phrase which can express the idea of completeness (all right, certain, determined, empty.

/ quite finished, full, ready, right, sure, wrong etc.) and when it is used with a very strong adjective/adverb such as amazing, extraordinary, horrible, perfect:

The bottle was quite empty. You're quite wrong. It's quite extraordinary; I can't understand it at all.

When used with other adjectives/adverbs, quite has a slightly weakening effect, so that quite

good is normally less complimentary than good. quite used in this way has approximately the same meaning as fairly but its strength can vary very much according to the way it is stressed:

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quite 'good (weak quite, strong good) is very little less than 'good'. 'quite good (equal stress) means 'moderately good'. 'quite good (strong quite, weak good) is much less than 'good'. The less quite is stressed the stronger the following adjective/adverb becomes. The more quite is stressed the weaker its adjective/ adverb becomes. Note the position of a/an:

quite a long walk quite an old castle

44 hardly, scarcely, barely

hardly, scarcely and barely are almost negative in meaning. hardly is chiefly used with any,

ever, at all or the verb can:

He has hardly any money, (very little money)

I hardly ever go out. (I very seldom go out.)

It hardly rained at all last summer.

Her case is so heavy that she can hardly lift it. But it can also be used with other verbs:

/ hardly know him. (I know him only very slightly.) Be careful not to confuse the adverbs
hard

and hardly:

He looked hard at it. (He stared at it.)

He hardly looked at it. (He gave it only a brief glance.) scarcely can mean 'almost not' and could replace hardly as used above: scarcely any/scarcely ever etc. But scarcely is chiefly used to mean 'not quite':

There were scarcely twenty people there, (probably fewer) (For hardly/scarcely with inversion,

see 45 and 342 E.) barely means 'not more than/only just':

There were barely twenty people there, (only just twenty)

I can barely see it. (I can only just see it.)

Inversion of the verb

45 Inversion of the verb after certain adverbs

Certain adverbs and adverb phrases, mostly with a restrictive or negative sense, can for emphasis be placed first in a sentence or clause and are then followed by the inverted (i.e. interrogative) form of the verb. The most important of these are shown below. The numbers indicate paragraphs where an example will be found.

hardly ever (see 38 A, C) on no account

hardly . . . when (342 E) only by

in no circumstances only in this way

neither/nor (112 D) only then/when

never scarcely ever

no sooner . . . than (342 E) scarcely . . . when

not only seldom

not till so (112 A)

nowhere (36 B)

I haven't got a ticket. ~ Neither/Nor have I.

I had never before been asked to accept a bribe.

Never before had I been asked to accept a bribe.

They not only rob you, they smash everything too.

Not only do they rob you, they smash everything too.

'He didn't realize that he had lost it till he got home.

Not till he got home did he realize that he had lost it.

This switch must not be touched on any account.

On no account must this switch be touched.

He was able to make himself heard only by shouting.

Only by shouting was he able to make himself heard.

He became so suspicious that ...

So suspicious did he become that ...

Note also that a second negative verb in a sentence can sometimes be expressed by *nor* with inversion:

He had no money and didn't know anyone he could borrow from.

He had no money, nor did he know anyone he could borrow from.

(neither would be less usual here.)

(For adverbs and adverb phrases followed by inversion of verb and noun subject, e.g. Up