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First Stage
English Grammar



Adjectives

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Adjectives are words that describe, modify, or quantify nouns and pronouns. They provide extra details about a person, place, or thing.

Adjectives ending in -ing and -ed (boring/bored etc.)

Many adjectives end in -ing and -ed, for example: *boring* and *bored*.

-Jane's job is **boring**.

-Jane is **bored** with her job.

Somebody is bored or gets bored if something (or somebody else) is boring.

If something is boring, you get bored with it.

So:

Jane is bored because her job is boring.

Jane's job is boring, so Jane is bored. (not Jane is boring)

If a person is boring, this means that they make other people bored.

Paul always talks about the same things. He's really boring.

Compare adjectives ending in -ing and -ed:

-ing

My job is: **boring**

interesting

Tiring

satisfying

depressing

In these examples, the -ing adjective tells you about the job, -ing describes things or places.

-ed

I'm **bored** with my job.

I'm not **interested** in my job any more.

I get very **tired** doing my job.

I'm not **satisfied** with my job.

My job makes me **depressed**.

In these examples, the -ed adjective tells you how somebody feels (about the job),
-ed describe people.

A. Sometimes we use two or more adjectives together:

-My brother lives in a nice new house.

-In the kitchen there was a beautiful large round wooden table.

Adjectives like new / large / round / wooden are **fact** adjectives. They give us
information about age, size, colour etc.

Adjectives like nice / beautiful are **opinion** adjectives. They tell us what the speaker
thinks of something or somebody.

Opinion adjectives usually go before fact adjectives.

B. Sometimes we use two or more fact adjectives together. Usually (not always)
we put fact adjectives in this order:

How big? How old? What colour? Where from? What is it made of? + Noun

Examples:

- a tall young man (1 → 2)

- big blue eyes (1 → 3)

- a small black plastic bag (1 → 3 → 5)

- a large wooden table (1 → 5)

- an old Russian song (2 → 4)
- an old white cotton shirt (2 → 3 → 5)

Adjectives of size and length (big / small / tall / short / long, etc.) usually go before adjectives of shape and width (round / fat / thin / slim / wide, etc.):

- a large round table
- a tall thin girl
- a long narrow street

When there are two or more colour adjectives, we use *and*:

- a black and white dress
- a red, white and green flag

This does not usually happen with other adjectives before a noun:

a long black dress (not a long and black dress)

We use adjectives after *be / get / become / seem*:

- Be careful!
- I'm tired and I'm getting hungry.
- As the film went on, it became more and more boring.
- Your friend seems very nice.

We also use adjectives to say how somebody/something looks, feels, sounds, tastes or smells:

- You look tired.
- I feel tired.
- She sounds tired.
- The dinner smells good.
- This tea tastes a bit strange.

But to say how somebody does something, you must use an adverb:

Drive carefully! (not Drive careful!)

-Suzanne plays the piano very well. (not plays ... very good)

D-

We say:

-the first two days

-the next few weeks

-the last ten minutes

Examples:

-I didn't enjoy the first two days of the course. (Not the two first days)

-They'll be away for the next few weeks. (Not the few next weeks)

Adjectives and adverbs (quick/quickly)

A-

You can say:

-Our holiday was too short – the time passed very quickly.

-Two people were seriously injured in the accident.

Quickly and seriously are adverbs. Many adverbs are adjectives + -ly.

Adjective

quick

serious

careful

bad

heavy

terrible

Adverb

quickly

seriously

carefully

badly

heavily

terribly

Not all words ending in -ly are adverbs. Some adjectives end in -ly too, for

example:

friendly

lively

elderly

lonely

lovely

- It was a lovely day.

B-

Adjective or adverb?

Adjectives (quick / careful etc.) tell us about a noun (somebody or something). We use adjectives before nouns.

- Sam is a careful driver. (not a carefully driver)

- We didn't go out because of the heavy rain.

Adverbs (quickly / carefully etc.) tell us about a verb (how somebody does something or how something happens).

- Sam drove carefully along the narrow road. (not drove careful)

- We didn't go out because it was raining heavily. (not raining heavy)

Compare:

She speaks perfect English. (adjective + noun)

She speaks English perfectly. (verb + noun + adverb)

C-

We use adjectives after some verbs, especially be, and also look / feel / sound etc.

Compare:

-Please be quiet.

- My exam results were really bad.

- Why do you always look so serious?
- I feel happy.

But:

- Please speak quietly.
- I did really badly in the exam.
- Why do you never take me seriously?
- The children were playing happily.

D-

You can also use adverbs before adjectives and other adverbs. For example:

reasonably cheap (adverb + adjective)

terribly sorry (adverb + adjective)

-incredibly quickly (adverb + adverb)

Examples:

- It's a reasonably cheap restaurant and the food is extremely good.
- I'm terribly sorry. I didn't mean to push you.
- Maria learns languages incredibly quickly.
- The exam was surprisingly easy.

You can also use an adverb before a past participle (injured / organized / written etc.):

- Two people were seriously injured in the accident. (not serious injured)
- The conference was badly organised.