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Module: English

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Adverbs of frequency

Adverbs of Frequency are adverbs of time that answer the question "How frequently?" or "How often?". They tell us how often something happens. Here are some examples:

1. daily, weekly, yearly
2. often, sometimes, rarely

You probably see a difference between a) and b) above. With words like *daily* we know exactly how often. The words in a) describe **definite** frequency. On the other hand, words like: *often* give us an idea about frequency but they don't tell us exactly. The words in b) describe **indefinite** frequency.

We separate them into two groups because they normally go in different positions in the sentence.

Adverbs of Definite Frequency:

Examples:

- hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, yearly
- every second, once a minute, twice a year
- once, twice, once or twice, three times

Adverbs of definite frequency, like all adverbs of definite time, typically go in END position. Look at these examples:

- Most companies pay taxes **yearly**.
- She took her medicine **every hour**.
- The directors meet **weekly** to review progress.

Sometimes, usually for reasons of emphasis or style, some adverbs of definite frequency may go at the FRONT, for example:

- **Every day**, more than five thousand people die on our roads.

Adverbs of Indefinite Frequency:

Look at these examples of adverbs of indefinite frequency:

100% **Always, constantly**

usually, normally, frequently, regularly, often.

50% **Sometimes**

occasionally, rarely, infrequently, seldom, hardly, ever.

0% **Never**

Adverbs of indefinite frequency mainly go in MID position in the sentence. They go **before** the main verb (except the main verb "to be"):

- We **usually** go shopping on Saturday.
- I have **often** done that.
- She is **always** late.

Occasionally, sometimes, often, frequently and *usually* can also go at the beginning or end of a sentence:

- **Sometimes** they come and stay with us.
- I play tennis **occasionally**.

Rarely and *seldom* can also go at the end of a sentence (often with "very"):

- We see them **rarely**.
- John eats meat very **seldom**.

Put the adverb in the right place in the sentence:

She goes to bed early (always)

We watch TV (never)

Julie and Tom go to the cinema (often)

Alex meets John (once a week)

eat fast food (sometimes)

They cook at home (hardly ever)

He studies English (every night)

You drink coffee (normally)

go to the park (rarely)

They go to a restaurant (from time to time)

You visit your parents (several times a year)

She goes to museums (seldom)

Answers:

1. She always goes to bed early.
2. We never watch TV.
3. Julie and Tom often go to the cinema.
4. Alex meets John once a week.
5. I sometimes eat fast food.
6. They hardly ever cook at home.
7. He studies English every night.
8. You normally drink coffee.
9. I rarely go to the park.
10. They go to a restaurant from time to time.
11. You visit your parents several times a year.
12. She seldom goes to museums.