

THE ENGLISH ADVERBS AND ADJECTIVES WITH THE SAME FORM

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Abstract: Our article aims at focusing on one major aspect of the English morphology: adjectives and adverbs which have the same form. These two parts of speech, the adjective and the adverb, have, more often than not, been confused and, implicitly, have raised a number of issues which native or non-native speakers of English have been confronted with. Most of the problems refer to particular words which have the same form, either they are used as adjectives or as adverbs. The article also brings forward different meanings of the same word, in order to clarify the usage of the same adverb, through various contextual illustrations.

Key-words: adjective, adverb, meaning, similarities, differences.

Our article wishes to be a comprehensive survey of the English adjectival and adverbial structures and forms, illustrated with numerous examples for emphasis. Words having the same form have been given special attention. The similarities and differences between adjectives and adverbs are shown, but the emphasis is on adverbs which have the same form, but different meanings.

Sometimes adverbs and adjectives have the same form:

back, cheap, clean, clear, close, dear, deep, direct, early, easy, enough, far, fair, fast, free, hard, high, ill, just, kindly, last, late, left, light, little, long, loud, low, much/more/most, near, next, outside, pretty, quick, right, sharp, short, still, straight, tight, well, wide, wrong.

Some of these adverbs have also a *-ly* form. The meanings of the *-ly* adverbs are different from those of the adverbs in the list. See below some of these differences and also some examples with the same word used both as an adjective and as an adverb (Geană, 2011: 82-97).

Used as adverbs:

- Write back soon.
- 1. I got it cheap. (*cheap = cheaply*)
2. She felt cheap when the teacher reprimanded her.

(*cheap = ashamed*)

- 3. I bought this dress very cheaply.

(*cheaply = at a low price*)

- 1. Wash the dishes clean.

(= *to get rid of dirt or impurities*)

- 2. a fuel that burns clean

(*clean = in a clean or nonpolluting manner*)

- 3. I clean forgot to wash the dishes.

(*informal English: clean = completely, entirely*)

- 4. The child was cleanly dressed.

(*cleanly = in a clean manner*)

- 5. The screw went into the wood cleanly.

(*cleanly = easily*)

- 1. Speak loud and clear! (*clear = clearly*)
2. Keep clear! (*clear = out of the way*)
3. She read the book clear to the end.
survey)

(*clear = completely*)

- 4. She clearly explained everything to us.

(*clearly = in an explicit way*)

- 5. The children had been clearly lost in the forest.

(*clearly = undoubtedly*)

- 1. She is close to me.
friend)

(*close = in a close position or manner*)

- 2. He remained close on his guard.

Used as adjectives:

the back door

a cheap sofa

a clean plate

clean air

a clean getaway

a cleanly way of dressing

(*carefully neat and clean*)

a clear answer

clear of danger (= *out of danger*)

a clear survey (= *a complete*

a close friend (= *an intimate*

a close examination of the facts

(close = in an attentive manner)

3. Parents should observe their children's behaviour very closely.

(closely = in a close or attentive manner)

- 1. They sold their merchandise dear.

(dear = at a high price)

2. She loved him dearly.

(dearly = affectionately, profoundly)

3. I would dearly like to see you.

(dearly = very much, very strongly)

- 1. He dug deep to find the coins.

(deep = to a great depth)

2. She worked deep into the night.

(deep = late)

3. She was deeply in love with him.

(deeply = greatly, extremely)

Deeply is used especially of feelings.

- 1. He went direct to the office.

(direct = straight)

2. The stairs lead directly to the chalet.

(directly = without deviation, straight)

3. Give us an answer directly!

(directly = at once, without delay)

4. They live directly opposite our house.

(directly = exactly)

- They arrived early at the station.

- 1. Relax and take it easy!

(easy = without haste or agitation)

2. Her success came too easy.

(easy = with little effort, easily)

3. She could easily do it.

(close = thorough)

dear clothes (= expensive clothes)

a deep hole

a direct route

an early train

an easy walk

an easy victory

(easily = without difficulty)

4. She is easily the best pupil in her class.

(easily = by far, undoubtedly)

5. She may easily come first.

(easily = probably, almost certainly)

• Is the meat cooked enough?

I don't have enough money.

• 1. She lives far from me.

a far country

(far = at a considerable distance)

2. I feel far better today. (far = much)

• 1. They have always played fair.

a fair game

(fair = in a proper or legal manner)

2. He was struck fair on the head.

(fair = directly, straight)

3. It was a fairly good dinner.

(fairly = rather, moderately)

4. They solved their problems quickly and fairly.

(fairly = justly, equitably)

5. They played fairly.

(fairly = in conformity with the rules, without cheating)

• The train went fast.

a fast train

• 1. Horses in our village are running free.

a free bird

(free = without constraint)

2. He did it for free.

a free meal

(free = without cost or payment)

3. They used to talk freely about anything.

(freely = openly, frankly, unreservedly)

4. He freely admits his addiction to drugs.

(freely = willingly, voluntarily)

• 1. They worked hard.

a hard work

(hard = with strenuous effort)

2. It is raining hard. (hard = heavily)

3. She stared hard at the man.

(hard = with great attention)

4. I could hardly talk. (hardly = scarcely)

5. They recovered their goods very hardly.

(hardly = with difficulty)

• 1. The bird flew high in the sky.

a high tower

(high = far up)

2. She was singing very high.

a high voice

(high = to a high pitch)

3. He made a fortune and lived high.

a high life

(high = in an extravagant or luxurious way)

4. Prices have gone up far too high.

a high price

(high = in or to a high degree)

5. She was a highly successful singer.

(highly = in a high degree)

6. He spoke highly of her.

(highly – favourably, with much respect)

7. Are you aware of the fact that she is
a highly placed person?

(highly = in a high position or rank)

• An ill-made road (ill = badly)

You look ill. (ill = sick)

• 1. That is just what I need.

(just = precisely, exactly)

2. This skirt is just as nice as that one.

(just = quite)

3. He has just received a letter.

(just = recently)

4. Could you wait just a minute?

(just = only)

5. The wedding was just marvelous.

(just = absolutely)

6. I have just managed to escape.

(just = barely)

7. He was justly considered the best writer
of his times. (justly = rightly)

8. According to the law, they judged him justly.

(justly = correctly)

- 1. She spoke kindly to us.

a kindly gesture

(kindly = in a kind manner)

- 2. The sun shone kindly.

a kindly breeze

(kindly = pleasantly, agreeably)

- 1. I last saw her two days ago.

the last time

(last = on the last occasion before the present)

- 2. In the running contest my brother arrived last. the last game of the season

(last = after all others)

- 3. Lastly, he bought a diamond ring.

(lastly = finally, in the end)

- 1. I arrived late at the meeting.

a late bus

(late = after the due or usual time)

- 2. I haven't seen her lately.

(lately = recently)

- Turn left!

the left hand

- 1. She always sleeps light.

a light sleeper

(light = in a light manner;

she can be easily awakened or disturbed)

- 2. She always travels light.

a light luggage

(light = with a minimum load or luggage)

- 3. She kissed him lightly on the forehead.

(lightly = with little force)

- 4. He took things lightly.

(lightly = in an unserious manner)

- 5. You should apply paint lightly.

(lightly = in a small quantity or extent)

- 1. She is used to sleeping little.

There is little time left.

(little = not much, scarcely)

- 2. They little expected to earn so much money.

(little = not at all, not in the least)

- How long will it last?

It will take a long time.

(long = for a certain time or period)

- 1. One should not speak so loud.

He has a loud voice.

(loud = audibly, noisily)

2. He has always been rejected because
he behaves very loud wherever he goes.

He has a loud behaviour.

(loud = aggressively and noisily)

- 3. This meat smells loud.

This egg has a loud smell.

(loud = unpleasantly, in a disagreeable manner)

- 4. The band played loudly.

(loudly = with relatively high volume, loud)

- 5. She is always dressed loudly.

(loudly = clamorously, in a manner that attracts attention)

• 1. He bows low. (low = in or to a low position,
level, or space)

- 2. He was brought low by failure.

a low individual

(low = in or to a reduced, humbled or degraded condition)

- 3. She always speaks low. (low = softly, quietly)

a low voice

- 4. These merchants always buy low and sell high.

a low fee

(low = at a small price)

- 5. He behaves lowly wherever he goes.

a lowly man

(lowly = in a meek or humble manner)

- 1. He is much more polite than his brother.

I don't need much money.

(much = to a great degree or extent)

- 2. I don't get out much.

(much = frequently, often)

3. After 20 years of marriage, she loved him even more. (*more = to or in a greater extent or degree*)

She needs more support from her husband. (*more = greater in size, amount, extent or degree*)

4. You should phone her twice more. (*more = in addition*)

She needs some more time. (*more = additional, extra*)

5. He writes most at night. (*most = in the highest degree; forming the superlative of both adjectives and adverbs*)

She is the most beautiful girl I have ever seen.

6. Her food mostly consists of cheese and greens. (*mostly = mainly, chiefly*)

7. We mostly go to clubs every Saturday night. (*mostly = regularly, usually*)

• 1. They live near. (*near = to, at or within a short distance or interval in space or time*)

There will be many earthquakes in the near future.

2. You are near right. (*near = almost*)

3. It was already nearly 8 o'clock. (*nearly = almost*)

4. They are nearly related. (*nearly = intimately, closely*)

• What is he doing next?
going
(*next = in the next place, hereafter*)
next

John is the next person who is to explain to us this lesson. (*the*

= the following)

• The weather outside is wonderful. (*outside = outward, exterior*)

There is only an outside chance of solving this problem. (*outside = little*)

• 1. She is a pretty good student. (*pretty = cute, winsome*)

a pretty girl (*pretty = cute,*

• +

(pretty = fairly, moderately)

2. It's pretty well impossible to cross
the river now. (pretty = almost)

3. She is always prettily dressed.
(prettily = nicely)

• 1. He always moves quick. *a quick move*
(quick = at a rapid rate, swiftly)

2. I hope he comes quick. (quick = soon)

3. Come quickly!
(quickly = at a rapid rate, with little or no delay)

4. The meeting quickly adjourned.
(quickly = immediately, promptly)

• 1. I went right to school. *a right line (right = straight,
direct)*

(right = in a straight line, directly)

2. The shirt doesn't fit right. *It is not the right time to act.*
(right = in the proper or desired manner)

3. Call me right after dinner.
(right = immediately)

4. They did not act right. *Do the right thing and confess!*
(right = correctly, justly – according to law or morality)

5. He answered the question right. *a right answer*
(right = correctly)

6. The car accident happened right here.
(right = exactly, just)

7. Act rightly!
(rightly = in a correct manner, properly)

8. He was rightly convicted for his crime.
(rightly = justly)

9. She was rightly chosen as the cheerleader
of her team. (rightly = correctly, justifiably)

- 1. *We arrived at home at 3 o'clock sharp.*

(*sharp = punctually, exactly*)

2. *She fell down the stairs but a man a sharp turn
who came from nowhere pulled her up sharp.*

(*sharp = suddenly, abruptly, promptly*)

- 3. *She was being sharply questioned.*

(*sharply = in an aggressive manner*)

4. *The style of Hemingway's prose was sharply
analyzed by his critics. (*sharply = clearly,
in a well-delineated manner*)*

- 5. *In the last few days, prices rose sharply.*

(*sharply = suddenly*)

- 1. *He stopped short when he saw me.*

(*short = suddenly, abruptly*)

- 2. *The door opened and thus he was cut short.*

(*to cut somebody short = to interrupt someone*)

- 3. *He talked short to everyone. (*short = rudely*)*

- 4. *He said he will join us shortly. (*shortly = soon*)*

- 5. *She will explain everything to us shortly.*

(*shortly = in a few words, briefly*)

- 6. *He said shortly that he didn't like it.*

(*shortly = in a curt, abrupt and discourteous manner*)

- 1. *One should stand still when he is at the dentist's.*

(*still = without movement, motionlessly*)

- 2. *He is still there.*

(*still = at the present time, for the present*)

- 3. *She still hadn't made a decision.*

(*still = yet*)

4. *Walking through the woods, the tourists
have seen a still more beautiful scenery.*

(*still = even, in an increasing amount or degree*)

5. *He hasn't done the right thing, still,
he remains your friend. (still = nevertheless)*

- 1. *He went straight home.*

(straight = directly, in a straight line)

- 2. *He drinks whiskey straight.*

(straight = not mixed with anything else, undiluted)

- 3. *Put the bedroom straight.*

(straight = in a neat and orderly condition)

- 1. *My shoes are laced too tight.*

(tight = snugly or with constriction)

- 2. *He was holding her tight.*

(tight = firmly, securely)

- 3. *Just hold her tightly.*

(tightly = in a tight or constricted manner)

- 4. *The window was tightly sealed.*

(tightly = securely fixed or fastened)

- 1. *You would do well not to say anything more.*

(well = in a prudent or sensible manner)

- 2. *All the children behaved well.*

(well = in a good or proper manner)

- 3. *He is always well informed.*

(well = to a great or considerable extent, fully)

- 1. *It was 4 a.m. and she was already*

wide awake. (wide = to the full extent, completely)

- 2. *The door was wide open.*

(wide = largely)

- 3. *Her novel is widely known.*

(widely = to a great degree)

- 4. *He travelled widely.*

(widely = far apart, extensively)

- 5. *It is widely known that Jim is my best friend.*

a straight line

a straight bourbon

*a straight room (straight = neatly
arranged)*

a tight collar

a tight knot

It would be well not to ask.

(well = advisable, prudent)

*All is well. (well = right,
proper)*

a wide selection

(wide = having great extent)

Look with wide eyes.

(wide = fully open or extended)

(widely = by many people)

- 1. You guessed wrong.

(wrong = in a wrong manner, erroneously)

- 2. She acted wrong to lie.

(wrong = immorally, unjustly)

3. I don't like him because he treats his guests wrong. (wrong = in an inappropriate or improper way)

4. He was wrongly diagnosed as having a lung cancer. (wrongly = incorrectly)

5. To do him justice, his opponent has wrongly won the competition. (wrongly = without justice or fairness)

Your information is wrong.

(wrong = incorrect, inexact)

a wrong behaviour

He said the wrong thing.

To conclude, we may say that the English adjective and adverb offer a wide range of possibilities, in the sense that the same word may bear different meanings, and only a good knowledge of them will make any speaker of the English language feel confident in using either certain adjective or a particular adverb correctly and in accordance with the English grammar rules. One should be aware that we have tried to cover as much language material as possible, but, under no circumstances, we could pretend that our article contains everything regarding this subject, since the English language, just like any other language, is changing very fast, as days go by.

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