

Adverbials of time

1 The following expressions are used to say when something happens or happened:

the day before yesterday the week before last yesterday
 last week today this week tomorrow next week
 the day after tomorrow the week after next
 I have an important meeting the day after tomorrow.

With *month* or *year* you use the same expressions as with *week*, for example:

the month before last last year
 this month the year after next



2 You use *ago* with the past simple tense to show how long before the time of speaking something happened:

The game started ten minutes ago. The bus went ages ago.

When you use *ago* you use expressions of time like *five minutes, an hour, three weeks, four months, a few years* and so on. The following expressions are also very common:

ages ago a long time ago some time ago not long ago a short time ago

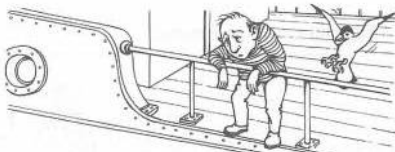
WARNING: You do not use *ago* with the present perfect tense. You cannot say:
 I have seen him two minutes ago.

I'll be leaving school the year after next.

3 You use adverbials of frequency to say how often something happens:

always	frequently	occasionally
never	hardly ever	normally
often	sometimes	usually
rarely		

We don't often swim in the sea.



I'm always sick when I travel by sea.

Adverbials of frequency usually come before the main verb:

I hardly ever watch tv. You can sometimes waste a lot of time.

But they come after the verbs *am, is, are, was, were* when these are used as main verbs:

She is usually very late. You are probably right.

Some adverbials of frequency (*sometimes, occasionally, normally, usually*) can come at the beginning of the sentence:

Sometimes I go swimming at the weekend.

Normally I go swimming on Thursday night.

A Answer these questions about yourself:

- When did you last go swimming? *I last went swimming three months ago.*
- When did you last go to the cinema? _____
- When did you start school? _____
- When were you born? _____
- When was your mother born? _____
- When did you have breakfast today? _____
- When were you last ill? _____
- When did you start learning English? _____

B Answer these questions:

- What is the date the day after tomorrow? _____
- What day was it the day before yesterday? _____
- What month was it the month before last? _____
- How old will you be the year after next? _____
- How old were you the year before last? _____

C Use adverbs of frequency to make true sentences:

- I am late for lessons. *I am often late for lessons.*
- I get up late on Sunday. _____
- I watch tv in the evening. _____
- I play tennis in the summer. _____
- In my country it is cold in winter. _____
- I read in bed before I go to sleep. _____

**Now write three true sentences about a friend:**

- _____
- _____
- _____

D Say whether these statements are true (T) or false (F):

- Adverbials of frequency never come at the beginning of a sentence. (F)
- 'Sometimes' can come at the beginning of a sentence. ()
- 'Always' often comes at the beginning of a sentence. ()
- Adverbials of frequency usually come before the main verb. ()
- You always use the present perfect tense with 'ago'. ()
- In conversations we often use short questions. ()