

A

Adverbs of **place** and **direction** (or adverbials, particularly prepositional phrases) usually go in end position, but we can put them in front position to emphasise the location. The effect may also be to highlight what comes at the end (e.g. 'a body' in the example below). This order is found mainly in formal descriptive writing and reports. Compare:

- The money was eventually found **under the floorboards**. (= end) *and*
- The police searched the house. **Under the floorboards** they found a body. (= front)

If we put an adverb of place in front position we put the subject *after* the verb **be** (see also Unit 99A):

- Next to the bookshelf** was a fireplace. (*or less formally Next to the bookshelf there was a fireplace; not Next to the bookshelf a fireplace was.*)

We can also put the subject after the verb with intransitive verbs (except with a pronoun subject) used to indicate being in a position or movement to a position:

- Beyond the houses **lay open fields**. *but*
- Beyond the houses **they lay**. (*not ... lay they*)

Also: hang, live, sit, stand; come, fly, go, march, roll, run, swim, walk

Note that '... open fields lay' might be used in a literary style.

However, we don't usually put the subject after the verb when we talk about actions: if one of these intransitive verbs is followed by an adverb of manner; with other intransitive verbs; or with transitive verbs:

- Through the waves the boy **swam powerfully**. (*rather than ... swam the boy powerfully.*)
- Outside the church the choir **sang**. (*rather than ... sang the choir.*)
- In the garden Nik **built a play house** for the children. (*not In the garden built Nik ...*)

B

When we put certain adverbs of time in front position the subject must come *after* an auxiliary verb or a main verb **be** (see also Unit 100):

- At no time** would *he* admit that his team played badly. (*not At no time he would admit ...*)
- Not once** was *she* at home when I phoned. (*not Not once she was ...*)

If the main verb is not **be** and there is no auxiliary, we use **do**, although inversion is not necessary in this case:

- Only later did** *she* realise how much damage had been caused. (*or Only later she realised ...*)

Adverbs like this include negative time adverbials such as **at no time**, **hardly ever**, **not once**, **only later**, **rarely**, and **seldom**. Note also that we can put **first**, **next**, **now** and **then** in front position with the verb **come** to introduce a new event, when the subject follows the verb. But if a comma (or an intonation break in speech) is used after **first** (etc.) the verb follows the subject. Compare:

- At first there was silence. **Then came** a voice that I knew. (*not Then a voice came ...*) *and*
- At first there was silence. **Then**, a voice *came* that I knew.

C

Adverbs of **time** which indicate a definite point or period in time or a definite frequency usually go in end position, or front position for emphasis, but not in mid position. Note that when these adverbs are in front position there is no inversion of subject and verb:

- I went to Paris **yesterday**. (*or Yesterday I went to Paris.*)
- We meet for lunch **once a week**. (*or Once a week we meet for lunch.*)

The adverbs **daily**, **hourly**, **monthly**, **weekly**, **annually**, **quarterly** (= four times a year), etc. only go in end position:

- I pay my subscription **annually**. (*not Annually I pay ...; not I annually pay ...*)

Exercises

76.1 Rewrite the sentences putting the italicised adverbs of place or direction at the front of the clause. If possible, invert the order of subject and verb. **A**

- 1 A dark wood was *at the bottom of the garden*.
At the bottom of the garden was a dark wood.
- 2 The car stopped suddenly and Daniel jumped *out*.
- 3 Two small children stood *outside the door*.
- 4 The boys were playing cricket *in the park*, despite the muddy conditions.
- 5 A jade necklace hung *around her neck*.
- 6 The man released the monkey and it climbed *up the tree*.
- 7 The door burst open and a delegation from the striking workers marched *in*.
- 8 While Marko was looking around for his net the fish swam *away*.
- 9 Most of the furniture was modern, but a very old grandfather clock was *in the corner*.
- 10 Lea found it difficult to concentrate *in the office*, but she worked more efficiently *at home*.

76.2 If possible, rewrite the italicised parts of these sentences putting the time adverbial in front position. Where you can, invert subject and verb, and make any other necessary changes.

B & C

- 1 I trusted Dan completely, and *I realised only later that he had tricked me*.
I trusted Dan completely, and only later did I realise that he had tricked me.
- 2 After working so hard all summer, *I had a holiday last week*.
- 3 Professor Coulson was to give the initial paper at the conference, but a *welcoming address came first by the head of the organising team*.
- 4 The area was cleared before the explosion, and *members of the public were in danger at no time*.
- 5 I've got high blood pressure and *I have to take tablets daily* for it.
- 6 When it became clear that he was in danger of losing the election, *a politician can seldom have changed his views so quickly as Beckett*.
- 7 After a few days of relative calm, *a blizzard came next, preventing us from leaving the hut*.
- 8 It's hard to imagine that *we'll be in Japan by next Friday*.
- 9 You won't have long to wait as *trains for Rome leave hourly*.
- 10 My grandfather was a gentle man, and *I hardly ever heard him raise his voice in anger*.

76.3 If necessary, correct the word order in these sentences. **A-C**

- 1 I walk to work for the exercise, and I twice a week play squash.
- 2 If you take the job, monthly your salary will be paid into your bank account.
- 3 Down the hill the horse ran quickly.
- 4 Through the window Megan watched sadly.
- 5 Around the town drove she for hours looking for the gallery, until she spotted in a side street the place.
- 6 I tripped over the cat, dropped the tray, and across the room flew it.

