

Word Order (2) – Adverbs with the Verb

A

Some *adverbs* (for example, *always/also/probably*) go with the *verb* in the middle of a sentence:

- Tom **always** drives to work.
- We were feeling **very** tired, and we were **also** hungry.
- Your car has **probably** been stolen.

B

Study these rules for the position of adverbs in the middle of a sentence. (They are only general rules, so there are exceptions.):

1) If the verb is one word (*goes/fell/cooked*, etc.), the adverb usually goes *before* the verb:

adverb verb

Tom	always	drives	to work.
I	almost	fell	as I was going down the stairs.

- I cleaned the house and **also** cooked dinner. (*not* cooked also)
- Lucy **hardly ever** watches television and **rarely** reads newspapers.

Note that these adverbs (*always/often/also*, etc.) go before *have to*:

- We **always** have to wait a long time for the bus. (*not* We have always to wait)

2) But adverbs go after *am/is/are/was/were*:

- We were feeling **very** tired, and we were **also** hungry.
- Why are you **always** late? You're **never** on time.
- The traffic **isn't usually** as bad as it was this morning.

3) If the verb is two or more words (*can remember / doesn't smoke / has been stolen*, etc.), the adverb goes *after the first verb* (*can/doesn't/has*, etc.):

verb 1 adverb verb 2

I	can	never	remember	his name.
Ann	doesn't	usually	complain.	
Are you	definitely	going		to the party tomorrow?
Your car	has	probably	been	stolen.

- My parents **have always** lived in Chicago.
- Jack **can't** cook. He **can't even** boil an egg.
- The house **was only** built a year ago, and it's **already falling** down.

Note that *probably* goes before the negative. So we say:

- I **probably won't** see you. *or* I will **probably not** see you. (*but not* I won't probably)

C

We also use *all* and *both* in these positions:

- We **all** felt sick after the meal. (*not* We felt all sick)
- My parents are **both** teachers. (*not* My parents both are teachers)
- Sarah and Jane **have both** applied for the job.
- We are **all** going out this evening.

D

Sometimes we use *is/will/did*, etc., instead of repeating part of a sentence (see Unit 48A).

Note the position of *always/never*, etc., in these sentences:

- He **always** says he won't be late, but he **always is**. (= he is always late)
- I've **never** done it, and I **never will**. (= I will never do it)

We usually put *always/never*, etc., before the verb in sentences like these.

Exercises

106.1 Is the word order in the underlined parts of these sentences right or wrong? Correct the ones that are wrong.

1. Tom drives always to work. Tom always drives
2. I cleaned the house and also cooked dinner. RIGHT
3. I have usually a shower when I get up. _____
4. We soon found the solution to the problem. _____
5. Steve gets hardly ever angry. _____
6. I did some shopping, and I went also to the bank. _____
7. Jane has always to hurry in the morning because she gets up so late. _____
8. We all were tired, so we all fell asleep. _____
9. She always says she'll call me, but she never does. _____

106.2 Rewrite the sentences to include the word in parentheses.

1. Ann doesn't drink tea. (usually) Ann doesn't usually drink tea.
2. We were on vacation. (all) _____
3. We were staying at the same hotel. (all) _____
4. We enjoyed ourselves. (all) _____
5. Catherine is very generous. (always) _____
6. I don't have to work on Saturdays. (usually) _____
7. Do you watch TV in the evenings? (always) _____
8. Josh is studying Spanish. He is studying Japanese. (also)
Josh is studying Spanish. He _____.
9. That hotel is very expensive. (probably) _____
10. It costs a lot to stay there. (probably) _____

106.3 Complete the sentences. Use the words in parentheses in the correct order.

1. I can never remember her name. (remember / never / can)
2. I _____ sugar in my coffee. (take / usually)
3. I _____ hungry when I get home from work. (am / usually)
4. "Where's Jim?" "He _____ home early." (gone / has / probably)
5. Mark and Diane _____ in Texas. (both / were / born)
6. Liz is a good pianist. She _____ very well. (sing / also / can)
7. Our cat _____ under the table. (always / sleeps)
8. They live on the same street as me, but I _____ to them. (never / have / spoken)
9. My eyesight isn't very good. I _____ with glasses. (read / can / only)
10. I _____ early tomorrow. (probably / leaving / will / be)
11. I _____ able to come to the party. (probably / be / won't)
12. It's hard to get in touch with Sue. She _____ at home when I call her. (is / hardly ever)
13. We _____ in the same place. We haven't moved. (still / are / living)
14. If we hadn't taken the same train, we _____ each other. (never / met / would / have)
15. "Are you tired?" "Yes, I _____ at this time of day." (am / always)