

French Adverbs («Les Adverbes»)

Introduction to French Adverbs

An **adverb** is an invariable word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Adverbs can provide additional information about time, manner, place, frequency, or quantity. They explain when, how, where, how often, or to what degree something is done.

Common French Adverbs

FREQUENCY		MANNER		TIME	
parfois	sometimes	bien	well	aujourd'hui	today
souvent	often	mal	poorly	demain	tomorrow
toujours	always	vite	quickly	hier	yesterday
rarement	rarely	-ment*	-ly	maintenant	now
				tard	late
				tôt	early
				déjà	already
PLACE		QUANTITY		enfin	finally
ici	here	assez	quite, fairly	actuellement	currently
là	there	beaucoup	a lot	bientôt	soon
là-bas	over there	peu	few, little	ensuite	next, then
partout	everywhere	trop	too much	longtemps	for a long time
quelque part	somewhere	très	very		

*Nearly every French word that ends in **-ment** is an adverb, usually of manner. Its English equivalent ends in **-ly**: généralement = generally.

The placement of French adverbs can be difficult. Whereas in English their placement is sometimes arbitrary (they can be found in front of or after the verb, or even at the beginning or end of the sentence), the placement rules for French adverbs are much stricter.

1. When the adverb is modifying a verb, it is placed **after** the conjugated verb.

Nous avons **bien** mangé.

We ate **well**.

Je regarde **souvent** la télé le soir.

I watch TV **often** in the evening.

I **often** watch TV in the evening.

Often, I watch TV in the evening.

2. When the adverb is modifying an adjective or another adverb, it is placed **in front** of the word it is modifying.

Nous avons **très** bien mangé.

We ate **very** well.

Je suis **profondément** ému.

I am **deeply** moved.

There are more rules, but these two apply to the majority of situations.