

Lesson 13. Sentence Adverbs

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Learning Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Define what sentence adverbs are.
- Recognize adverbs commonly used in sentence adverbs.
- Distinguish sentences with adverbs from sentence adverbs through examples and diagrams.
- Understand the debate of the use of the adverb hopefully in sentences.
- Use sentence adverbs to talk about random topics.

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You might already know what adverbs are.

Adverbs modify verb, adjective and other adverbs.

The answer the adverb questions.

How? When? Where? Why? To what extent?



Sentence adverbs are a little bit different.

Some adverbs refer to a whole statement and not just a part of it. They are called **sentence adverbs** and they act as a comment, showing the attitude or opinion of the speaker or writer to a particular situation.

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Whereas an adverb typically modifies the verb of a sentence, a sentence adverb is an adverb that appears usually at the beginning of a sentence and modifies the sentence as a whole. This type of adverb usually ends in –ly and is often followed by a comma.

actually	conceivably	incidentally	regrettably	truthfully
apparently	confidentially	indeed	seriously	ultimately
basically	curiously	interestingly	strangely	wisely
briefly	fortunately	ironically	surprisingly	
certainly	hopefully	naturally	thankfully	
clearly	ideally	predictably	theoretically	

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Dictionary

hon•est•ly | 'änistlē |
adverb

H **1** in a truthful, fair, or honorable way: *he'd come by the money honestly.*

2 used to emphasize the sincerity of an opinion, belief, or feeling: *she honestly believed that she was making life easier for Jack.*

- [sentence adverb] used to emphasize the sincerity or truthfulness of a statement: *honestly, darling, I'm not upset.*
- [sentence adverb] used to indicate the speaker's disapproval, annoyance, or impatience: *honestly, that man is the absolute limit!*

In a truthful, fair, or honorable way

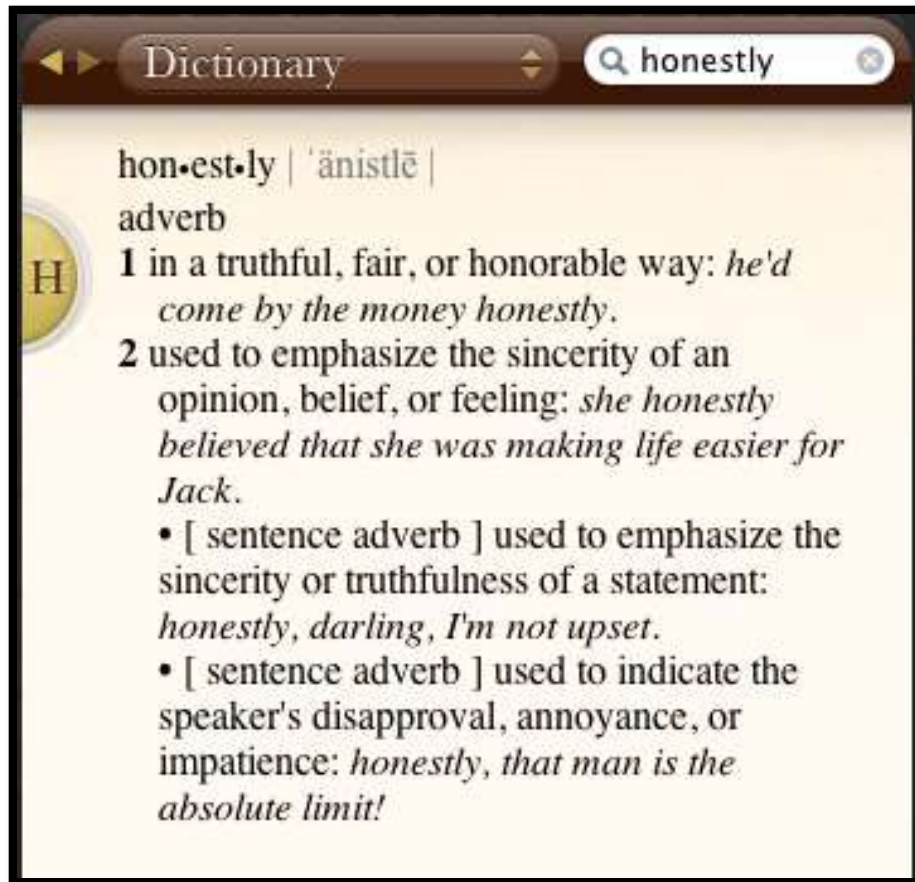
He earned the money honestly.

This adverb tells us about the verb. It tells us how he earned the money.

Look at the diagram below:



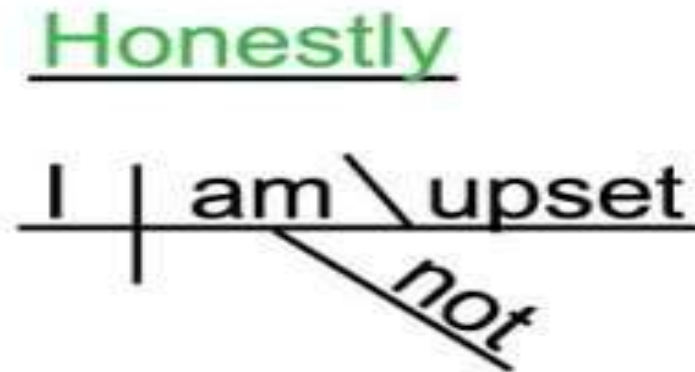
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Used to emphasize the sincerity or truth of a statement

Honestly, I am not upset.

It is diagrammed above the sentence because it's not modifying any particular word.



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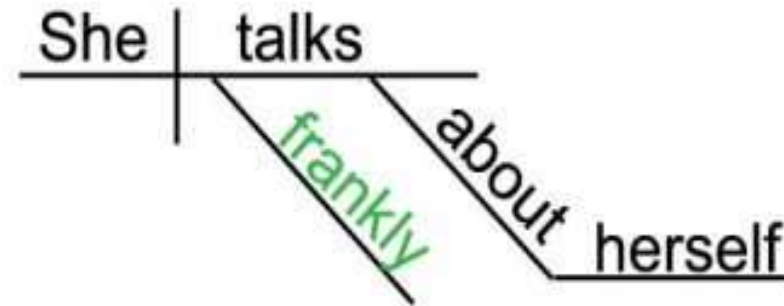
In an open, honest, and direct manner

She talks frankly about herself.

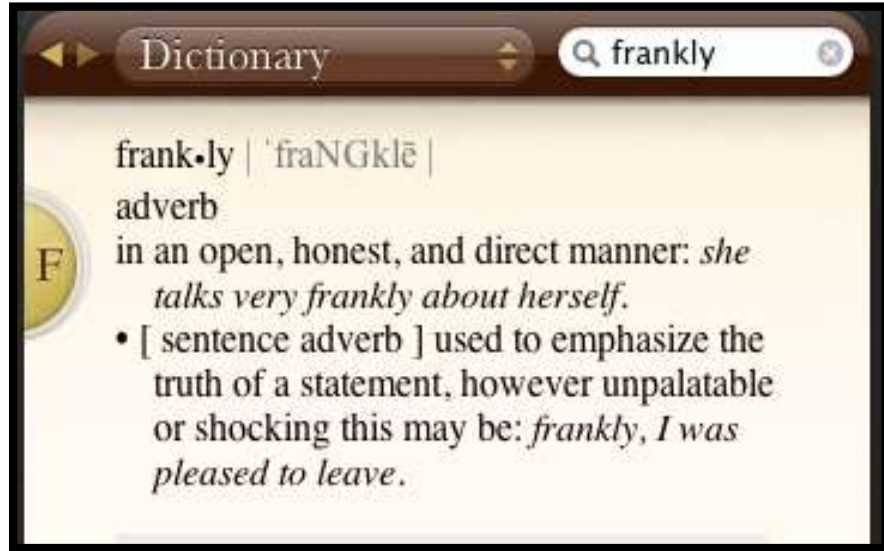
In this example sentence, *frankly* tells us more about the verb *talks*.

How does she talk? She talks *frankly*.

You can also see that *frankly* modifies *talks* when you look at the sentence diagram.



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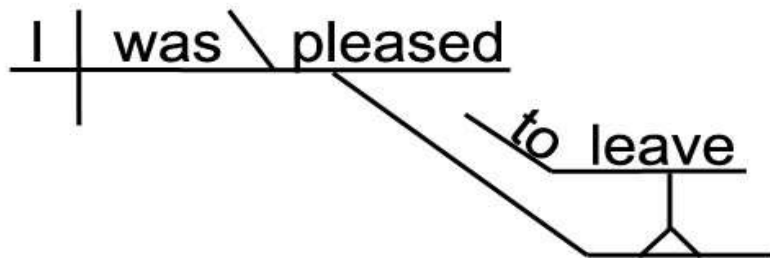


used to emphasize the truth of a statement, however unpalatable or shocking this may be

Frankly, I was pleased to leave.

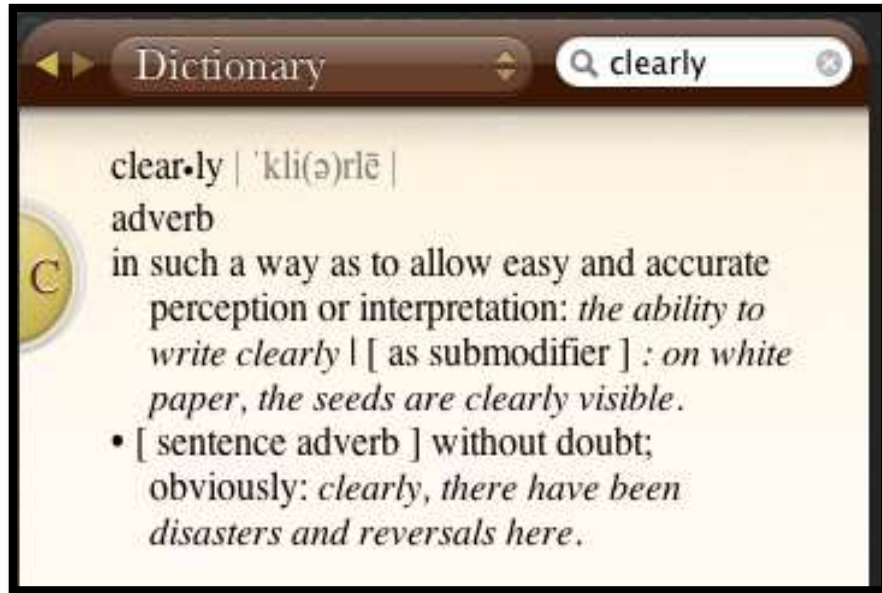
In this example sentence, frankly tells us about the writer's attitude. It's as though it is modifying the sentence as a whole rather than a single word within sentence.

Frankly



In the diagram, frankly sits on a line above the whole sentence showing us that it is a sentence adverb.

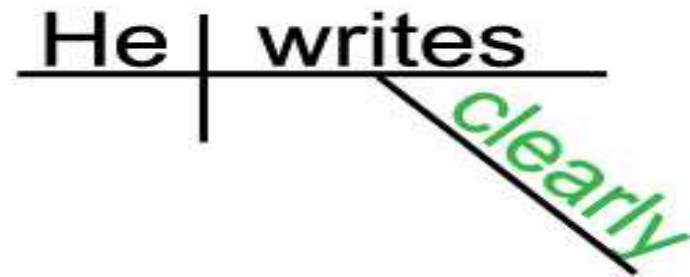
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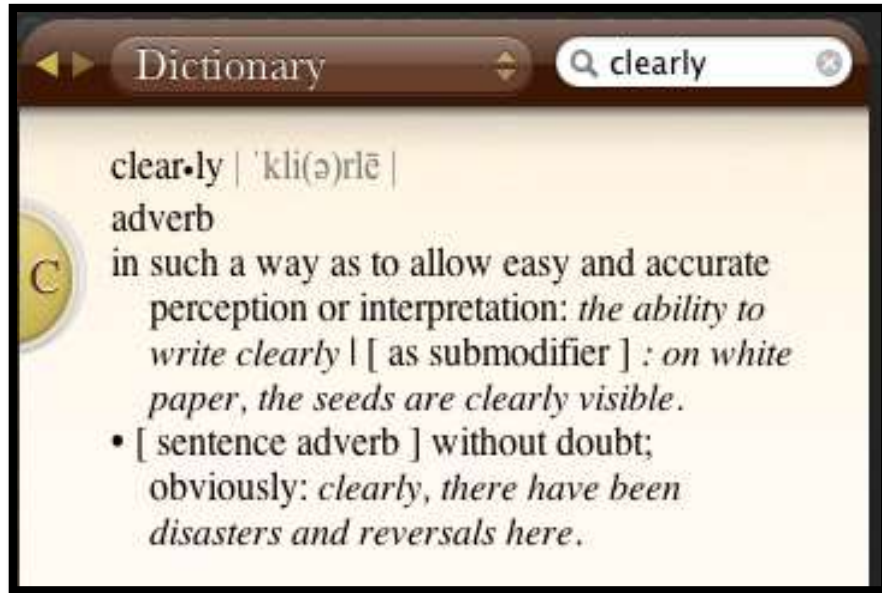
in such a way as to allow easy and accurate perception or interpretation.

He writes clearly.

This adverb tells us about the verb writes. It tells us how he writes.



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without a doubt, obviously

Clearly, the medicine isn't working.

In this sentence, clearly tells us how the writer feels about the situation

Clearly

medicine | is working
this | n't

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If you happen to know anyone who is a bit of a **grammar snob**, he or she might tell you that it is incorrect to use hopefully as a sentence adverb. This is one of those **grammar myths** that is not necessarily true. Some people profess that the use of hopefully is indicative of lazy writing and makes the meaning of the sentence unclear.

However, hopefully appears in all kinds of writing, and you can even find it in the dictionary as meaning *“I hope”* or *“it is to be hoped.”* While certain individuals might nitpick and even argue with you over its use, hopefully is a generally acceptable sentence adverb, especially in plain language pieces. Even the Associated Press Stylebook, which once rejected the use of hopefully as a sentence adverb, now accepts it as grammatically correct.

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Identify whether the following are sentence adverbs. If not, identify the element that the adverb is describing.

1. Clearly, there have been unacceptable delays.
2. Sue works unusually hard on Saturdays
3. Does hay actually cause hay fever?
4. The dangerously narrow bridge scared me.
5. Sadly, the forests are now under threat.
6. Curiously, he never visited America.
7. She carefully considered whether proper grammar should dictate her future friendships.
8. Fran answered somewhat enthusiastically.
9. Thankfully, the lower roads were free of snow and ice on our drive over.
10. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., is an exceptionally talented writer

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Talk about the following topics using sentence adverb.



kids throwing
tantrums



sudden pour of rain



an unexpected good
news



waking up feeling
under the weather



receiving a birthday
present



being stood up on a
date

The End