

Common Adjective and Adverb Errors

An **adjective** is a word that modifies (adds information about) a noun or pronoun. Adjectives usually answer the questions - which, what kind of, or how many.

An **adverb** is a word that modifies (adds information about) a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Adverbs usually answer the questions - when, where, why, or in what way.

Some writers make mistakes in their choices of adjectives and adverbs. They may use an adjective where an adverb is correct or vice versa. These adjective and adverb mistakes are easy to make because the incorrect versions are often used in informal speech. For example, you might say to a friend, “That’s real sad,” but “real” is incorrect. You should use the adverb “really” because it modifies “sad,” which is an adjective.

Be especially careful with these adjectives - adverb pairs:

<i>Adjective</i>	<i>Adverb</i>
* good	well
* bad	badly
real	really
slow	slowly
terrible	terribly
quick	quickly

* The adjective form of good and bad should be used when they follow the verbs **taste**, **smell**, **was**, **look**, **am**, **were**, **feel**, **is**, **seem**, **sound**, and **are** even though they are modifying verbs.

Example: She looks good.
 Victor is good at golf.

Practice Problems

1. Parents often feel (bad, badly)_____when they must discipline their children.
2. In emergency situations, parents must make decisions (quick, quickly)_____.
3. If children behave (good, well)_____, they should be praised.
4. (Real, Really)_____good parents listen to their children.
5. If you speak (slow, slowly)_____, children will understand you better.
6. Children who feel (terrible, terribly)_____about themselves are less likely to succeed in school.
7. It is (real, really)_____important for parents to be patient with their children.
8. Don't feel (bad, badly)_____about what happened last night.
9. When children misbehave, parents should not get angry too (quick, quickly)_____.
10. A child who does not do (good, well)_____in school may need extra attention from parents at home.

Solutions

1. bad
2. quickly
3. well
4. Really
5. slowly
6. terrible
7. really
8. bad
9. quickly
10. well