

## ADJECTIVES VERSUS ADVERBS

**Adjectives** always describe *nouns*.

They answer the questions, "Which?" "What kind of?" and "How many?"

**Adverbs**, on the other hand, describe *verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs*.

They often answer the question, "How?" but can also answer "When?" "Where?" and "Why?"

Helpful tip:

Usually, adverbs are distinguishable from adjectives by their *-ly* ending (e.g. properly, nicely). However, some adjectives end with *-ly*, too (e.g. jolly), and some adverbs lack the common *-ly* ending (e.g. fast).

Identifying parts of speech: *The candidates for the job opening were interviewed intensely.*

The word candidates is the subject of the sentence. The phrase were interviewed is the verb because it describes the action received by the subject. The word intensely refers to how the candidates were interviewed; it characterizes a verb and is, therefore, an adverb.

### Examples

- o Her skin cleared up ~~nice~~<sup>nicely</sup> after she began using that expensive treatment.
- o The boy breathed ~~heavy~~<sup>heavily</sup> because he had been chasing the dog for three miles.
- o Betsy ~~gratefu~~<sup>gratefully</sup> received all the flower bouquets she got on Mother's Day.
- o Chances to find a moon fish off of the coast of California are ~~real~~<sup>really</sup> slim.
- o Mrs. Sawyer was glad to see her son did ~~good~~<sup>well</sup> on his math test.

Helpful tip: In the last example sentence, *well* is used to modify the word *did*.

However, Diana Hacker explains that the word *well* is an adjective when it refers to something "healthy," "satisfactory," or "fortunate" (Hacker 199). For example:

*He is alive and well.*

*After a terrible cold, she felt well once she had rested for a week.*

For more exercise and practice go to pages 273-277 in *The Little Seagull Handbook*.