uses

In French as in English, an adverb describes the action of a verb. It answers such questions as 'where', 'when,' 'how,' 'how long,' or 'how often.' Adverbs are invariable and may be used with almost all verbs. For example:

Edouard cuisine **bien**.  
Edouard cooks well.

Joe-Bob mange **beaucoup**.  
Joe-Bob eats a lot.

An adverb may also qualify an adjective or another adverb. Consider the sentence: 'Edouard cuisine **très bien**' (Edouard cooks very well). **Très** qualifies **bien** and both describe the action of the verb 'cuisiner'.

common adverbs

Following is a list of frequently used adverbs, categorized by type:

- **manner**
  - **bien**, well
  - **mal**, badly
  - **vite**, quickly

- **time**
  - **souvent**, often
  - **quelquefois**, sometimes
  - **tôt**, early
  - **tard**, late
  - **toujours**, always
  - **jamais**, never

- **place**
  - **dedans**, inside
  - **dehors**, outside
  - **ici**, here
  - **là**, there
  - **partout**, everywhere
  - **quelque part**, somewhere

- **quantity or degree**
  - **beaucoup**, a lot
  - **trop**, too much
  - **peu**, little, not much
  - **assez**, enough
  - **très**, very

- **sequence**
  - **d'abord**, at first
  - **puis**, then, next
  - **enfin**, finally
  - **donc**, thus
  - **alors**, then, so
  - **enfin**, finally

formation of regular adverbs

A large number of French adverbs are derived from adjectives.

They are usually formed by adding **-ment** to the **feminine singular form of the adjective**. Note the exception 'gentiment', which is derived from the adjective 'gentil' (nice).

- **lent(e)**, slow  
  - **lentement**, slowly

- **doux** (douce), soft  
  - **doucement**, softly
however, **-ment** is added to the **masculine singular form of adjectives that end with a vowel**. note the exception 'gaiement' which is derived from the adjective 'gai' (cheerful).

- heureux (heureuse), happy  heureusement, happily, fortunately
- franc (franche), frank  franchement, frankly

poli(e) polite  poliment, politely
absolu(e), absolute  absolument, absolutely
vrai(e), true, real  vraiment, truly, really
modéré(e), moderate  modérément, moderately

add **-ement** to the stem of adjectives that end in -ent; add **-amment** to the stem of adjectives ending in -ant. the stem is what remains of the adjective when -ent or -ant have been removed. note that the one-syllable adjective 'lent' does not form its adverb, 'lentement', on this model.

- récent, recent  récemment, recently
- fréquent, frequent  fréquemment, frequently
- suffisant, sufficient  suffisamment, sufficiently
- méchant, wicked, malicious  méchamment, wickedly, nastily

note the addition of an acute accent to form the following adverbs:

- précis(e), precise  précisément, precisely
- profond(e), deep  profondément, deeply
- énorme, huge, enormous  énormément, enormously

placement

use the following guidelines for placement of adverbs.

**adverbs that modify an adjective or another adverb**

adverbs are placed directly before the adjective or adverb that they modify.

edouard: j'habite le texas depuis très longtemps, mais je trouve que le barbecue est vraiment dégueulasse!

edouard: i've lived in texas for a very long time, but i find that barbecue is truly disgusting!

**adverbs that modify a verb**

adverbs are usually placed immediately after the conjugated verb. if the verb is negative, the adverb is placed after the negation.
Edouard comprend mal les habitudes culinaires américaines.
Edouard ne marche pas vite, parce qu’il sait déjà ce que les clients vont commander.
Edouard: Ils exigent toujours du ketchup, mais il n'y a pas de ketchup dans mon restaurant.

Note that most common adverbs are placed directly after the verb before the objects.

Joe-Bob: J'aime beaucoup le ketchup!
Edouard: J'aime davantage le foie gras!

adverbs that modify a whole sentence
If an adverb is a comment on the entire sentence (malheureusement, en plus), it may be placed at the beginning or end of the sentence. Adverbs of this type include adverbs of time and place. In the following dialogue, contrast the adverbs that modify the whole sentence to those that modify just the verb.

Joe-Bob: Edouard, viens dîner avec nous ce soir!
Edouard: Je n'aime pas dîner dans des restaurants américains parce que je trouve du ketchup partout.
Vous allez sûrement au Salt Lick, et tu sais que je déteste le barbecue.
Joe-Bob: Malheureusement, on n'a pas assez d'argent pour aller dans un restaurant snob!
Edouard refuse obstinément l'invitation de Joe-Bob: Tu m'invites souvent, mais toujours à l'américaine!

Joe-Bob: Edouard, come out to eat with us this evening!
Edouard: I don't like to eat in American restaurants because I find ketchup everywhere.
You’re surely going to go to the Salt Lick and you know that I detest barbeque.
Joe-Bob: Unfortunately, we don't have enough money to go to a snobby restaurant!
Obstinately, Edouard refuses Joe-Bob's invitation: You invite me out to eat often, but always in the American style.

See placement of adverbs with passé composé and the periphrastic future for further examples.
Fill in the blanks

Adverb placement: Complete the answers to Tammy's questions using the adverb in parentheses.

1. Tammy : Tu comprends la poésie de Tex? Trey : Non, je/j’ ___________. (mal)
2. Tammy : Tu aimes le chocolat? Tex : Oui, je/j’ ______________.. (énormément)
3. Tammy : Comment va Rita? Tex : Elle _______________. (très bien)
4. Tammy : Tu aimes le café? Tex : Oui, je/j’ _______________. (beaucoup)
5. Tammy : Tu penses à Bette? Trey : Oui, je/j’ _______________. (toujours)
6. Tammy : Bette est sexy? Trey : Ah oui, elle _______________.(extraordinairement)
8. Tammy : Tu manges du chili? Joe-Bob : Oui, je/j’ _______________.(souvent)
9. Tammy : Tu aimes Sartre? Tex : Oh oui, je/j’ _______________. (vraiment)
10. Tammy : Tex connaît Trey? Tammy : Non, Tex _____________. (bien)
11. Tammy : Tex est génial! Bette : Oui, Tex ________________. (absolument)
12. Tammy : Tex porte un béret? Edouard : Oui, Tex _____________.(fréquemment)