Adverbs of frequency: further information

'Hardly ever'

This expression has the same meaning as rarely and seldom. It is common in conversation:

> **Now that we have children, we hardly ever go to a restaurant anymore.**

'Rarely' or 'occasionally'?

These have the same meaning but are used in different ways. Rarely has a negative suggestion - something doesn't happen often enough; it should be or we would like it to be more often:

> **Now that I have children, I rarely have enough time to read.**
> **He rarely has an opportunity to speak English in his job so it's difficult for him to improve.**

Occasionally feels more positive. It's not often but enough to be satisfactory:

> **We don't have a lot of money but we occasionally go to the theatre or a restaurant.**
> **I like this job; the work's interesting and, occasionally, I go on a trip abroad.**

Compare these two people who go to the gym 5-6 times per year:

> **I rarely go to the gym; the nearest one is 20km away and I'm usually too tired when Iget home from work. [this person would like to go to the gym more often.]**
>
> **I occasionally go to the gym; I also swim, go cycling and play for a local football team - I like variety! [this person is satisfied with occasional visits because he enjoys doing other things too.]**

Note that, on the other hand:

rarely	**+ negative or undesirable state or activity**	**= a positive global meaning**

I rarely have to go to the doctor's. = I'm in good health most of the time.

Although he's unhappy at work, he rarely complains.
She's very reliable - she's rarely late for meetings or too busy to help her colleagues.

Daily, weekly, monthly, etc.

These and other similar words are more commonly used as adjectives but are sometimes used as adverbs, especially in passive sentences:

Adjective	Adverb
I buy a monthly magazine.	The magazine is published monthly.
We have yearly appraisals.	Our appraisals are carried out yearly.
The IT department recommends the daily back-up of files.	Files should be backed up daily.

Although it is possible to use these adverbs in active sentences:

You should use this lotion daily.

We are more likely to use others:

You should use this lotion once a day.
I go to the cinema every week.

Word order and construction

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1. **It is possible to use some adverbs of frequency with some modal verbs. The word order varies. Here are some examples:**

   We should never be/arrive late.
   I can never find my keys in the morning.
   You must often be tired by the end of the day - you work so hard.
   We should always be/arrive on time.
   Occasionally, we should do this differently.
   We should do this more often.
   Sometimes, we needn't work late.

2. **With perfect tenses, the adverb is usually placed between 'have' and the past participle:**

   I've never been to China.
   He's always enjoyed cycling.
   They'd rarely travelled abroad before starting this job.

But we sometimes place never, rarely or seldom at the beginning of a sentence and invert the subject and verb for emphasis:

Seldom have I seen such a beautiful view.
Never have I worked with such great people.

3. **Always can sometimes be used with continuous tenses. See the present continuous for more information.**

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