

# Adverbs of frequency

## Introduction



We **always** wash the car on Saturdays.

## Definition

Adverbs of frequency indicate how frequently something happens.

## Uses

We use them with verbs to answer the question 'How often?' and in the following situations:

Use	Examples
To indicate frequency.	We <b>often</b> go to Indian or Chinese restaurants but we <b>rarely</b> cook Asian food at home.  He <b>always</b> forgets to close the door.  I <b>never</b> travel by plane.
To talk about routines and habits.	I go running <b>every</b> morning and play tennis <b>once a week</b> .  We <b>always</b> have a meeting on Monday mornings.



<b>Occasionally</b>	<p><b>Occasionally</b>, I'm on time.</p> <p>I'm <b>occasionally</b> on time.</p> <p>I'm on time <b>occasionally</b>.</p>	<p><b>Occasionally</b>, we arrive late.</p> <p>We <b>occasionally</b> arrive late.</p> <p>We arrive late <b>occasionally</b>.</p>
<b>Sometimes</b>	<p><b>Sometimes</b>, I'm late.</p> <p>I'm <b>sometimes</b> late.</p> <p>I'm late <b>sometimes</b>.</p>	<p><b>Sometimes</b> we arrive late.</p> <p>We <b>sometimes</b> arrive late.</p> <p>We arrive late <b>sometimes</b>.</p>
<b>Often, frequently</b>	<p><b>Often</b>, I'm late.</p> <p>Are you <b>frequently</b> late?</p>	<p><b>Frequently</b>, we arrive late.</p> <p>Do they <b>often</b> arrive late?</p>

## Similarities

'Usually', 'normally' and 'generally' are used in the same way. They do not indicate how frequently something happens. Instead, they tell us about habits - what is usual.

**Normally**, I get up later at weekends.

We usually go skiing in the winter but this year we're visiting friends in Paris.

I generally start the day with a cup of tea.

'Regularly' can mean **frequently** but it is also used to indicate something that happens at similarly timed intervals:

I visit the dentist regularly.

You need to take these tablets regularly.

'**Seldom**' has the same meaning as 'rarely'.

We **seldom** have meetings on Fridays.

## Other expressions

We use these kinds of expressions in a similar way to adverbs of frequency in order to give more detailed information.

<p>once a week twice a year four times a day</p>	<p>every morning every day every Friday every summer every other week</p>	<p>daily weekly monthly yearly</p>	<p>on Fridays at the weekend/at weekends in the mornings</p>
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And there are other expressions that we can use in conversation. Here are some examples:

Expression	Approximate meaning	Examples
from time to time	sometimes	We rarely see each other but she calls me from time to time.
(every) now and then	sometimes	"Do you often speak English?" "Oh, every now and then - mostly on the phone."
(every) once in a while	occasionally	It's hard work looking after three children and having a full-time job but every once in a while, I have a relaxing weekend away with friends.
once in a blue moon	very rarely	My husband cooks dinner once in a blue moon.

## Examples



He's **always** busy.



They **frequently** meet for lunch, usually on Fridays.



We **rarely** go into the city, but we love the theatre so we go there **occasionally**.



Take one of these **every four hours**.

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