

Adjectives used as adverbs

The category adverb is a grammatical garbage can: The term covers a group of words and functions with only one thing in common: They do not fit anywhere else.

In English a large group of adverbs are formed by adding the ending **-ly** to an adjective.

- *He was not beautiful but he sang **beautifully**.*

This system is not consequent though: Some adverbs do not take the ending and in some cases a different word is used:

- *He hit me **hard** on the nose. (not: hardly)*
- *It was a **good** song and he sang it quite **well**. (not: goodly)*

The Danish equivalent of adverbs ending on *-ly* is the *-t* form of the adjective:

- *Han ikke smuk men sang **smukt**. (He was not beautiful but he sang beautifully)*

Like in English the system is not consequent - in some adverb functions adjectives do not add the *-t*. The ensuing rules about adverbs from adjectives are not the full truth, but they will help you make the same mistakes as most Danes.

1) Adverbs describing verbs take the **-t** ending:

- Han gik roligt ned ad gaden. (He was walking quietly down the street)

2) Adverbs describing adjectives or adverbs take the **-t** ending

Sengen var dejligt blød. (= the bed was soft in a pleasant way)

Han talte dejligt tydeligt (= he talked distinctly in a pleasant way)

3) Adverbs measuring adjectives or adverbs take the **-t** ending – except for adjectives ending on **-lig** and **-vis**:

- Solen var pænt varm. (the sunshine was quite hot)
- Solen var virkelig varm, (the sunshine was really hot) (exception)
- Han gik relativt hurtigt. (He was walking relatively fast)
- Han gik forholdsvis hurtigt. (He was walking relatively fast) (exception)

Adverb or adjective?

Adjectives describe nouns or pronouns. Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives or other adverbs.

Examples:

Adjectives describing the subject:

Han virker urolig. (he seems upset)



Han bliver søvning efter 3 øl. (After a total of 3 beer he gets sleepy)

Adjectives describing the object:

Han malede stolene grønne. (He painted the chairs green)



Han så bladene blive grønne. (He saw the leaves turning green)



Han gjorde bilen ren. (= He cleaned up the car)

Adverbs describing verbs:

Han skreg højt. (He was crying out loud)



Jeg hørte ham råbe højt. (I heard him crying out loud)



Han var offentligt ansat. (He was publicly employed)



Adverbs describing adjectives:

Min øl var dejligt stor. (=My beer was big in a lovely way)



Øllen gjorde mig dejligt fuld. (The beer made me drunk in a lovely way)



Adverbs describing adverbs

Han sang sindsygt højt. (He was singing insanely loud.)



Det var rigtig tidligt om morgenen (it was really early in the morning)

