❶ Review the Basics

Adjectives and **adverbs** are modifiers—they describe other words in a sentence. An *adjective* modifies a noun or a pronoun.

MODIFIES NOUN   **Hawaii has titanic waves.**

MODIFIES PRONOUN   **They can be intimidating.**

An *adverb* modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

MODIFIES ADVERB   **The waves crash very dangerously.**

MODIFIES VERB   **Yet surfers ride them gracefully.**

MODIFIES ADJECTIVE   **It's quite beautiful.**

Adjectives

An adjective qualifies or specifies the meaning of the noun it modifies. It answers one of these questions:

WHAT KIND?   **silver ornaments, huge serving, lively writing**

WHICH ONE?   **this fossil, another book, those computers**

HOW MANY?   **three rings, some exhibitors, few volunteers**

HOW MUCH?   **enough help, abundant harvest, little chance**

Nouns, pronouns, and even articles can function as adjectives, modifying the nouns they precede.

Nouns as Adjectives
mouse pad   **business** letter   **tuna fish** salad

Possessive Pronouns as Adjectives
his portfolio   **our** Web site   **their** supervisor

Demonstrative Pronouns as Adjectives
that application   **this** uniform   **those** menus
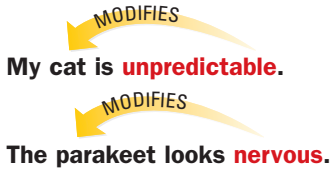
Articles
an undertaking   **a** game   **the** one I want

Proper adjectives are formed from proper nouns. They are always capitalized, as are proper nouns.

Proper Adjectives	
Proper Nouns	**Proper Adjectives**
America	American
French	French
Jefferson	Jeffersonian

Predicate adjectives follow linking verbs and modify the subject of a sentence. Unlike most adjectives, predicate adjectives are separated from the words they modify.

MODIFIES

My cat is unpredictable.

MODIFIES

The parakeet looks nervous.

Adverbs

Most adverbs end in *-ly.* They answer these questions about the words they modify: How? Where? When? To what extent?

Adverbs	
How?	opened **slowly**, praised **profusely**, hummed **softly**
Where?	waddled **away**, sank **lower**, rode **east**
When?	shipped **yesterday**, arrived **early**, slept **late**
To what extent?	**so** early, **very** sorry, **really** pleased

The word *not* is an adverb that tells to what extent. Though it often comes between the parts of the verb, it is not part of the verb. Example: could not go; verb = could go