

What Are Adjuncts?

An adjunct is a word or words (i.e., a phrase or a clause) which can be removed without making the sentence grammatically wrong.

An adjunct is usually an adverb used to modify a verb. When used as an adverb, an adjunct will usually indicate a time, a manner, a place, a frequency, a reason, or a degree. For example:

Time Adjuncts (Adverbs of Time)

Here are some examples of time adjuncts:

- The alarm went off again yesterday.
- In the morning, he will veto the bill.

Manner Adjuncts (Adverbs of Manner)

Here are some examples of manner adjuncts:

- Present your case carefully.
- Simon drinks his pints like a demon.

Place Adjuncts (Adverbs of Place)

Here are some examples of place adjuncts:

- Here the situation is completely different.
- She buries all her toys wherever Ollie buries his.

Frequency Adjuncts (Adverbs of Frequency)

Here are some examples of frequency adjuncts:

- She comes here often.

- Every Tuesday, the shop opens at eight o'clock.

Reason Adjuncts (Adverbs of Reason)

Here are some examples of reason adjuncts:

- As it's Friday, you can stay up another hour.
- Expect the tent to leak because it's been in my garage for 30 years.

Degree Adjuncts (Adverbs of Degree)

Here are some examples of degree adjuncts:

- You're not as poor as you could have been.
- She is as smart as she is brilliant.

Using a Comma after an Introductory Adverbial Clause or Phrase

It is common for a sentence to start with an introduction. An introduction can be anything from just one word to a long clause.

An introduction is used to state a time, a place, a condition, a frequency, or a fact before the main part of the sentence.

(These "introductions" vary hugely. They are known as dependent clauses because they cannot stand alone as complete ideas. If an "introduction" contains its own subject and verb, it will be an adverbial clause, otherwise it will be an adverbial phrase. The main part of the sentence (i.e., the clause after the "introduction") is called an independent clause.)

Read more about clauses and phrases.

Examples of Introductory Adverbial Clauses and Phrases

In these examples, the introductory adverbial clauses and phrases are shaded:

- In the centre of London, the number of people who fell victim to pickpockets rose by 30 per cent in a month. ✓

(This adverbial phrase sets a place.)

- After twelve years of therapy, my psychiatrist said something that brought tears to my eyes. He said, "No hablo ingles." ✓

(This adverbial phrase sets a time.)

- In ancient Rome, it was considered a sign of leadership to be born with a crooked nose. ✓

(This adverbial phrase sets a place and a time.)

- As soon as the cake is golden-brown, take it out of the oven. ✓

(This adverbial clause sets a time.)

- From the moment I picked your book up until I laid it down, I was convulsed with laughter. Someday, I intend reading it. ✓ (Groucho Marx)

(The first is an adverbial phrase that sets a time. The second is an adverbial phrase that sets a time.)

- When I was young, I used to think that money was the most important thing in life. Now that I am old, I know it is. ✓ (Oscar Wilde)

(Both adverbial clauses set a time.)

- On Tuesday 4th July a band played carols in the park for 8 hours. ✗

(The adverbial phrase *On Tuesday 4th July* sets a time. It is an introduction and should be followed by a comma.)

- Having spoken to John, I can confirm that the meeting is definitely off. ✓

(The phrase *Having spoken to John* states a fact that "sets the scene." This type of phrase is known as a participle phrase.)

- As you are well aware, the latest figures do not look promising. ✓

(The adverbial clause *As you are well aware* states a fact that "sets the scene.")

- After the secretary had read the minutes of the meeting, the chairman asked for the financial report. ✓

(The adverbial clause *After the secretary had read the minutes of the meeting* sets a time.)

- A band played in the park for 8 hours on Tuesday 4th July. ✓

(The adverbial phrase *on Tuesday 4th July* sets a time, but it is not an introduction. It is at the back end of the sentence. Therefore, no comma is required.)

- On Tuesday 4th July, a band played in the park for 8 hours. ✓
(Compare this example to the one above.)
- If you are going through hell, keep going. ✓ (Winston Churchill)
(This adverbial clause sets a condition.)