

Adverbs and Expressions of Opinion¹

Actually (adv.) = 1) really; in fact; e.g. *The people who actually did the work were not mentioned.* 2) (used to express opinion) though it may seem strange; even; e.g. *Mary not only entered the competition - she actually won it!* (**Explanation:** The fact of the situation is this; or I am correcting you, or giving you a piece of information; I'm giving you my honest opinion, even though you don't like it; or I am saying that this **really** happened, even though it is hard and surprising to believe.)

Admittedly (adv.) = (esp. at the beginning of a clause) as is or must be recognized or agreed; e.g. *Admittedly, he didn't know that at the time. // The plan, admittedly, is not without its difficulties.* (**Explanation:** I know this contradicts what I've just said; this is a point which goes against what I am saying and weakens my argument.)

After all (idiom) = 1) In spite of what has been said, done or expected; e.g. *So you've come after all! // After all, what does it matter?* 2) it should be remembered; e.g. *He should have offered to pay - he has plenty of money, after all.* (**Explanation:** I am giving a reason that supports what I have just said; or I am trying to persuade you by reminding you of something you know.)

Anyway (adv.) = **Anyhow** = 1) (used when saying something to confirm or support an idea or argument just mentioned) in addition; besides; e.g. *It's too expensive and anyway the color doesn't suit you.* 2) in spite of something; even so; e.g., *The water was cold but I had a bath anyway.* 3) (used when changing the subject of a conversation, ending the conversation, or returning to a subject after an interruption) e.g., *Anyway, let's forget about that for the moment. // Anyway, I'd better go now - I'll see you tomorrow. // Anyway, as I was saying...*

Apparently (adv) = according to what one has read or heard; as it seems; e.g. *He had apparently escaped by bribing a guard. // Apparently they're getting divorced.* (**Explanation:** This is something I've heard, but I'm not sure of.)

As a matter of fact (idiom) = (used for emphasis) in reality; to tell the truth; e.g. **A:** *I have to send this package to Caracas.* **B:** *I'm going there tomorrow, as a matter of fact.* (**Explanation:** I am adding a comment which is relevant to what you have just been saying.)

Basically (adv.) = in a general or simple sense; with regard to the main aspect or aspects of something; e.g. *Despite her criticisms, she's basically very fond of you. // The novel is basically about human relationships. // Basically, I agree with your proposals, although there are a few small points I'd like to discuss.* (**Explanation:** This is my basic (= fundamental) point.)

¹ The meanings and illustrative examples given here have been taken mainly from **The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English** by A. S. Hornby (1995) and **Headway Advanced**.

By the way = (used to introduce a comment or question that is not directly related to the main subject of conversation) e.g. *Oh, by the way, there is a telephone message for you. // What did you say your name was, by the way?*

Even (adv.) = 1. (used to emphasize something unexpected or surprising in what one is saying or writing) e.g., *He never even opened the letter.* (i.e., so he certainly didn't read it) // *He didn't answer even my letter.* (i.e., so he certainly didn't answer any others.) // *It was cold there even in summer.* (i.e., so it must have been very cold in winter) // *Even a child can understand it.* (i.e., so adults certainly can.) 2) (used to emphasize a comparison, esp. with something great or extreme) still; yet ; e.g., *You know even less about it than I do. // Sally drives fast, but Jane drives even faster. // She's even more intelligent than her sister.* 3) (used to add force to a more exact or precise version of a word, phrase, etc.) e.g. *It's an unattractive building, even ugly (or ugly even).*

Frankly (adv.) = 1. (qualifying a sentence) speaking honestly; to be truthful; e.g., *Frankly, I couldn't care less what happens to him. // Quite frankly, I'm not surprised he failed.* 2. in a frank (= open, honest and direct) manner; e.g., *She expressed her opinion fully and frankly.* (**Explanation:** This is my frank opinion; or in an honest manner.)

Generally (adv.) 1. by most people; widely; e.g. *He's generally popular. // The plan was generally welcome.* 2. in general terms; without regard to details; e.g., *Let's talk first about investment generally. // General speaking, it's quite a fair settlement.* (**Explanation:** This is an opinion that is true in most situations.) 3. usually; e.g., *I generally wake up at 6 a.m.*

Honestly (adv.) = 1. in an honest way; e.g. *I always deal honestly with my customers.* 2. (used for emphasis) really; e.g., *I don't honestly know. // Honestly, Helen, that's all the money I've got. // I think I can honestly say I've never smoked in my life. // Quite honestly, she isn't the sort of person we're looking for.* (**Explanation:** This is my honest opinion; or in an honest manner.) 3. (used to show that one disapproves of something and is irritated by it); e.g., *Honestly! What a fuss he's making!*

Ideally (adv.) = 1. satisfying one's ideas of what is perfect; most suitably; e.g. *She's ideally suited for the job.* 2. existing only in the imagination or as an idea; e.g., *Ideally, everyone should be given equal opportunities.* (**Explanation:** This would be the ideal or perfect situation.)

In all fairness = being reasonable and just, e.g., *In all fairness, it must be said that he's done a splendid job.* (**Explanation:** I think it would be only fair to take as fact what I am saying.)

Incidentally (adv.) 1. (used to introduce something additional that the speaker has just thought of) by the way; e.g., *Incidentally, whatever became of Edward? I haven't heard of him for a long time.* (**Explanation:** I am adding a piece of information that I have just thought of.)

Just (adv.) = 1. exactly (used before nouns and noun phrases, adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases and clauses); e.g., *It's just two o'clock. // This jacket is just my size. // The sauce tastes just right. // Put the box just here. // She looks just like her mother. // It's just what I wanted. // Just what do you think you're doing?* 2.(a) (esp. after **only**) by a small amount, barely, just manage to do something; e.g., *I just missed the target. // I can only just reach the shelf, even when I stand on tiptoe. // She only just caught the train.*

(b) (used before prepositional phrases of time or measurement) by a small amount, a little; e.g., *It happened just before Christmas. // He weighs just over 60 kilos.*

Mean to say = 1. to admit readily; e.g. *Do you mean to say you've lost?* 2. try to say; e.g., *When John used the word 'industry', he meant to say 'hard work'.* (**Explanation:** This is what I am trying to say.)

Naturally (adv.) 1. by nature; e.g. *She's naturally musical. // He's a naturally gifted actor.* 2. of course, as might be expected; e.g., 'Did you answer her letters?' 'Naturally!' // *Naturally, as a beginner, I'm not a very good driver yet.* (**Explanation:** This is not surprising; it is to be expected.) 3. Without artificial help, special treatment, etc.; e.g., *Guava trees grow naturally in the Venezuelan plains. // Her hair curls naturally.* 4. Without exaggerating; in a normal way; e.g., *Try to act naturally, even if you're feeling tense.* 5. easily; almost without trying; e.g., *Most people come naturally to him.*

Obviously (adv.) = as can easily be seen or understood; without doubt; e.g., *He was obviously drunk. // Obviously, we don't want to spend too much money.* (**Explanation:** This cannot be doubted; everyone knows; or of course he did; or it was **quite apparent.**)

Only (adv.) = 1. (used to modify a word or phrase and placed close to it in written or formal spoken style; in informal speech, stress may show which word, etc. is modified, so that **only** may have various positions) and no one else or nothing else; e.g., *I only saw Mary* (i.e., I saw Mary and no one else) // *I only saw Mary.* (i.e., I didn't speak to her) // *Only members may use the bar.* 2. no longer than; e.g., *I saw him only yesterday.* 3. not until; e.g., *He arrived only on Tuesday.*

Personally (adv.) 1. not represented by another; in person; e.g., *All letters will be answered personally. // All meals are personally supervised by the restaurant owner.* 2. as a person; e.g., *I don't know him personally, but I've read his books.* 3. (often at the beginning of a statement) as far as I am concerned; for myself; e.g. *Personally, I don't like him at all. // Personally speaking (or Speaking personally), I'm in favor of the scheme.* (**Explanation:** This is my personal opinion.)

Presumably (adv.) = it may be supposed; e.g., *Presumably, the plane was late because of the fog. // You came by car presumably?* (**Explanation:** This is something I suppose is true, but I'm not certain.)

Quite (adv.) = 1. (used esp. with adjectives or adverbs that refer to a gradable quality; not used with a negative) to some extent; not very; fairly; rather; e.g. *The weather is quite warm in here. // Your car is quite big. // We had to wait quite a long time. // He plays quite well. // I quite like opera. // I found the test quite hard.* 2. (used esp. with adjectives and adverbs that refer to a gradable quality; not used with a negative) perfectly; completely; very; e.g., *He's quite happy at his new school. // You'll be quite comfortable here. // I can see it quite clearly.* 3. (used with adjectives and adverbs to emphasize something; not used with a negative) e.g., *This ice-cream is quite delicious! // The boy's answers were quite amazing! // The view was quite breathtaking. // She performed quite brilliantly.* 4. (used esp. with words that refer to an absolute quality) completely, entirely; e.g., *Are you quite sure? // I don't think that's quite right // I quite agree with you.* (**Explanation:** I'm **positive.**)

Sensibly (adv.) = in a sensible (i.e. reasonable; sound) way; e.g. *John was sensibly dressed for the meeting. // They decided, quite sensibly, to postpone the broadcast for a few months.* (**Explanation:** I think this was sensible of them.)

Seriously (adv.) 1. in a serious (i.e., careful/solemn/not silly) way; e.g. *The teacher was speaking seriously about inattendance to class.* // *After the accident, John was seriously injured.* 2. (informal) (used at the beginning of a sentence when turning to a serious matter) e.g., *Seriously though, you could really hurt yourself doing that.* (**Explanation:** I have stopped joking, this is a serious situation.)

Still (adv.) 1. up to and including the present time or the time mentioned; e.g., *It's still raining.* // *Do you still live in London?* // *I still can't do it.* (**Explanation:** this continues to be the case) 2. (used for talking about an action or opinion that is not expected because something else makes it surprising); e.g. *Although she felt ill, she still went to work.* // *He's treated you badly; still, he's your brother and you should help him.* (**Explanation:** I am emphasizing that this is the case, despite what has just been said) 3. (a) (used for making a comparative adjective stronger); e.g., *Tom is tall, but Mary is taller still.* // *The next day was warmer still.* (b) in addition; more; e.g., *He came up with still more stories.*

Strictly speaking (idiom) = if one uses words, applies rules, etc., in their exact sense; e.g., *Strictly speaking, he's not qualified for the job.* (**Explanation:** I am giving you precise information about a situation.)

Surely (adv.) = 1. (used to show that the speaker is certain or almost certain of what he or she is saying; or to express surprise at something); e.g., *This is surely her best play.* // *He must surely have known you were unhappy.* // *Surely, you're not going to eat that.* (**Explanation:** This must be the case, mustn't it; this is so obvious that I would be surprised if you disagreed with me.) 2. (esp. formal) without doubt, certainly; e.g. *This will surely cause problems.* // *If the refugees don't receive food soon, they will surely die.* 3. (informal esp. in AmE) of course; yes; e.g., A: *'Can I borrow your car?'* B: *'Surely!'*