

A2 TEENS · GRAMMAR · LESSON 04

How often do you *lie*?

(the harmless ones!)

"Your haircut looks great!" "Sorry, my phone was dead!" We all tell small lies to be polite. In this lesson, you will learn **adverbs of frequency** — *always, usually, often, sometimes, rarely, never* — and where to put them in a sentence.

🕒 45 min · ✓ CEFR A2 · ♦ Adverbs of Frequency · ♦ Everyday Habits

01 WARM-UP

Be honest (just this once)

Quick confession time...

Read each question and answer *always, usually, sometimes, rarely, or never*. No cheating!

- 01 How often do you say "I'm fine" when you're actually not?
- 02 How often do you tell your parents "I'm studying" when you're on your phone?
- 03 How often do you say "I love this gift!" when you really don't?
- 04 How often do you tell a friend "I read your message — sorry!" (when you forgot)?

02 GRAMMAR FOCUS

Adverbs of frequency — from 100% to 0%

The frequency scale

Adverbs of frequency tell us **how often** something happens. Think of it like a volume dial — from loud (always) to silent (never).

always I always brush my teeth before bed. **100%**

usually She usually walks to school. **~90%**

often We often eat pizza on Fridays. **~70%**

sometime s	He <u>sometimes</u> forgets his keys.	~50%
rarely / seldom	They <u>rarely</u> watch horror films.	~10%
hardly ever	I <u>hardly ever</u> drink coffee.	~5%
never	My cat <u>never</u> sleeps in the morning.	0%

Position — where does the adverb go?

This is the most important rule of this lesson. Adverbs of frequency go in different places depending on the verb.

► Rule 1 — With most verbs: the adverb goes **BEFORE** the main verb.

SUBJECT + ADV +
VERB

I **always** drink water in the morning.

SUBJECT + ADV +
VERB

We **often** play football after school.

SUBJECT + ADV +
VERB

Maya **never** eats breakfast.

⚠ Rule 2 — With "to be" (am/is/are): the adverb goes **AFTER** the verb.

The verb **to be** is special — the adverb goes **AFTER** it, not before.

- She **is usually** tired on Mondays.
- My friends **are always** late.
- I **am never** bored at the weekend.

? Rule 3 — Asking "How often...?"

When we want to know the frequency of something, we start with **How often...?**

How often do you check your phone? — *About fifty times a day.*

How often does she visit her grandma? — *Every Sunday.*

How often do they travel? — *Once or twice a year.*

How often is he late? — *Almost every day!*

03

KEY VOCABULARY

Words for your honest confession

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
lie verb/noun	to say something that isn't true	<i>Don't lie to me — I can see your phone.</i>
honest adjective	telling only the truth	<i>My brother is always honest with me.</i>
polite adjective	showing good manners	<i>It's polite to say "please" and "thank you."</i>
excuse noun	a reason you give for not doing something	<i>"My dog ate my homework" is a classic excuse.</i>
pretend verb	to act like something is true when it isn't	<i>I often pretend to enjoy my aunt's cooking.</i>
avoid verb	to stay away from	<i>She usually avoids her noisy neighbour.</i>
admit verb	to say that something is true (often something bad)	<i>I rarely admit when I'm wrong.</i>
guilty adjective	feeling bad because you did something wrong	<i>He feels guilty after telling a lie.</i>
truth noun	the real facts	<i>Sometimes the truth is uncomfortable.</i>
promise verb/noun	to say that you will definitely do something	<i>I promise I'll never do it again!</i>

04

READING

Five teens, five harmless lies

HONEST CORNER · ISSUE 04

Harmless Lies

we all tell them

Five teens confess, anonymously (well, almost)

We asked five teenagers one simple question: "What small lies do you tell every week?" Their answers are funny, honest, and a little bit relatable.

Everyone tells small lies sometimes. They're not harmful — they're a way to be polite, to avoid awkward moments, or just to make life easier. Our five teens were surprisingly honest about their honest dishonesty.

LEO, 16, SPAIN**ALWAYS**

"I always tell my grandma her food is the best in the world." The truth? Her fish soup is terrible. But she **is always so happy** when I eat it. My mum knows, my dad knows, everyone knows — but nobody says anything. Some lies make people happy. I'm not sorry.

NINA, 15, ITALY**USUALLY**

"I usually say 'I'm almost there' when I haven't even left the house." I rarely arrive on time to anything. My best friend Chiara **is always angry** with me, but she forgives me. I sometimes promise I'll be faster next time. I never am.

YUSUF, 14, TÜRKIYE**OFTEN**

"I often pretend my phone died." When a teacher asks why I didn't reply to a message, or when a friend wants me to help with something boring, the phone is my excuse. My phone **is hardly ever actually dead**. I feel guilty for about two seconds, and then I move on.

EMMA, 17, GERMANY**SOMETIMES**

"I sometimes say 'I've read your message!' when I haven't." On WhatsApp, everyone sees the blue ticks. If a friend sends a long message, I often open it quickly and close it again. Later, they ask, "Did you see my message?" I always say "Yes!" even when I have no idea what they sent me. I will read it... eventually.

ARJUN, 16, INDIA**RARELY**

"I rarely tell the full truth about how much homework I have." My parents ask, "Are you done?" I usually say "Almost!" even when I have three hours of maths left. I sometimes admit the truth — when it's Sunday evening and I'm crying over my books. My parents **are never surprised**.

Editor's note: These small lies are part of being human. But remember — big lies **always** become problems. The truth, even when it's uncomfortable, **usually** makes life simpler in the end. *Now tell us: what's YOUR harmless lie?*

05**PRACTICE****Put the adverb in the right place**

★ Each sentence has an adverb to add. Circle the option where the adverb is in the CORRECT position. Watch out for the verb "to be"!

- 1 Add **always**: "I _____ tell my grandma her food is delicious."
 Always I tell **I always tell** **I tell always**
-
- 2 Add **usually**: "Nina _____ late for school."
 usually is **is usually** **is late usually**
-
- 3 Add **never**: "My cat _____ early in the morning."
 wakes up never **never wakes up** **wakes never up**
-
- 4 Add **sometimes**: "We _____ pizza on Fridays."
 eat sometimes **are sometimes** **sometimes eat**
-
- 5 Add **often**: "How _____ do you check your phone?"
 much **often** **long**
-
- 6 Add **rarely**: "My brother _____ the truth."
 is rarely **tells rarely** **rarely tells**
-
- 7 Add **always**: "My friends _____ helpful when I need them."
 always are **are always** **are helpful always**
-
- 8 Add **hardly ever**: "Yusuf _____ answers his messages."
 answers hardly ever **is hardly ever** **hardly ever**

06 **SPEAKING**
How often do you...?

Interview your partner

Ask your partner these questions. They must answer with an adverb of frequency: always, usually, often, sometimes, rarely, hardly ever, never. No yes/no answers allowed!

- ▶ How often do you tell a small lie to be polite?
- ▶ How often are you late for something?
- ▶ How often do you pretend to understand something when you don't?
- ▶ How often do your parents ask about your homework?
- ▶ How often do you feel guilty about something small?

EXAMPLE CONVERSATION

- A:** How often do you tell a small lie to be polite?
B: Hmm... I usually tell one small lie a day. "Your hair looks great!" — things like that.
A: Do you feel guilty?
B: I rarely feel guilty. It makes the other person happy.
A: Fair. And how often are you late?
B: I am almost always five minutes late. My friends know this about me.

07 **WRITING**
Your honest confession

Write about your weekly habits (70-90 words)

Write about **four** things you do with different frequencies. For example: something you *always* do, something you *usually* do, something you *rarely* do, and something you *never* do. Be honest!

- at least 4 different adverbs of frequency
- at least one sentence with the verb "to be" (I am usually..., My friends are always...)
- at least one "How often...?" question at the end
- correct adverb position (before the main verb, after "to be")

Blank writing area with horizontal lines for text entry.

08

QUIZ

Check your understanding

Circle the correct answer. Check your answers at the end.

1. Choose the CORRECT position of the adverb:

- A. Always I am tired on Mondays.
- B. I always am tired on Mondays.
- C. I am always tired on Mondays.
- D. I am tired always on Mondays.

2. Which sentence is CORRECT?

- A. He usually walks to school.
- B. He walks usually to school.
- C. He walks to school usually.
- D. Usually he walks to school.

3. 'I _____ miss the bus — I'm on time every day.'

- A. always
- B. often
- C. never
- D. sometimes

4. How do you ask about frequency?

- A. How much do you check your phone?
- B. How many do you check your phone?
- C. How long do you check your phone?
- D. How often do you check your phone?

5. Which adverb means about 50%?

- A. always
- B. sometimes
- C. never
- D. hardly ever

6. Choose the CORRECT sentence:

- A. My friends never are late.
- B. My friends are late never.
- C. My friends are never late.

D. Never my friends are late.

7. 'Leo _____ tells his grandma her food is delicious, but it isn't.'

A. never

B. rarely

C. always

D. hardly ever

8. Which sentence uses the adverb in the WRONG position?

A. She often reads before bed.

B. I am usually hungry at 7 p.m.

C. They never watch horror films.

D. We eat always breakfast at 8.

ANSWER KEY

Fill in the blanks:

1. I always tell · 2. is usually · 3. never wakes up · 4. sometimes eat
5. often · 6. rarely tells · 7. are always · 8. hardly ever

Quiz:

1. C · 2. A · 3. C · 4. D · 5. B · 6. C · 7. C · 8. D

Honest work! Next lesson: Stative Verbs — "Do you really love pizza?"