Adjectives modify nouns and pronouns.

- They are immoveable.
- They answer questions like these: What kind? How many? Which one?
- They can occur as words, phrases, or clauses:
  - word, as in “the red chair” or “The chair was red.”
  - phrase, as in “the chair with red cushions”
  - clause, as in “the chair that had red cushions”

Adverbs modify verbs, adverbs, and adjectives.

- They are moveable within the sentence. (After dinner, he went out. He went out after dinner.)
- They answer questions like these: Where? When? How? Why? Under what conditions?
- They are frequently, but not always, formed by the addition of “ly” to an adjective, as in “real” to “really” or “quick” to “quickly.”
- They are frequently overused with the result that they water down the point they’re intended to emphasize, making them really, truly, absolutely, totally, positively, very, truly important to use sparingly, for sure.
- They can occur as words, phrases, or clauses:
  - word, as in “He ran fast. He ran very fast. He was very sweaty.”
  - phrase, as in “He ran like the wind.”
  - clause, as in “He ran as if he were the wind.”

Restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers

- Phrases or clauses that are restrictive modifiers are not punctuated with commas. Restrictive modifiers (restrict) limit that which they modify:
  - Employees who work hard receive raises. (Raises are limited to those employees who work hard.)
  - My cousin Ernie came over for dinner. (I have more than one cousin, so “Ernie” limits the possibilities by telling you which cousin came over.)
- Phrases or clauses that are nonrestrictive modifiers are punctuated with a set of commas, dashes, parentheses, or brackets if they break up a clause:
  - Employees, who work hard, receive raises. (All employees receive raises. The phrase who work hard says why.)
  - My cousin, Ernie, came over for dinner. (I have only one cousin, so the name is supplemental information.)
  - We went, last Saturday, to dinner. (The phrase last Saturday answers when we went to dinner.)
- Nonrestrictive modifiers that introduce main clauses may be punctuated with commas.
  - Last Saturday, we went to dinner.
  - We went to dinner last Saturday.
  - Last Saturday we went to dinner.

More questions? Contact the Avery Point Academic Center at 860-405-9058 or email us at apac@uconn.edu.