

Confusing Adjectives and Adverbs

No and Not

Not is an adverb that negates a verb or an adjective.

No is an adjective and therefore modifies a noun.

Examples:

She is *not* tired. (*not* negates the predicate adjective *tired*)

Juan does *not* want to go out with Carmen. (*not* negates the verb *does want*)

He has *no* money. (*no* modifies the noun *money*)

Too and Very

Too indicates excess.

Very indicates degree and means extremely. When *very* is used as an adjective it means "the exact one."

Both can be used as adjectives or adverbs. When used as adverbs they intensify adjectives or adverbs. *Very* and *too* are not interchangeable.

Examples:

There is *too* much snow on the car! (*too* as an adverb modifies the adjective *much* and means "an excess of snow")

He was *too* fat to sit in the airplane seat. (*too* is an adjective modifying *fat*)

She has the *very* book that I needed for my paper. (*very* as an adjective modifying *book* and means "this exact book")

The test was *very* difficult. (*very* as an adverb modifies the adjective *difficult*)

Few and A Few

Few connotes hardly any.

A few is the same as some.

Both are adjectives used with countable plural nouns or can be nouns themselves.

Examples:

There are *few* movies that I want to see this year. (*few* is an adjective modifying *movies* meaning "not many")

There are *a few* movies that I want to see this year. (*a few* is an adjective modifying *movies* meaning "some")

Many are called but *few* are chosen. (*few* is a noun. In reality the sentence is saying "Few [people] are chosen" with *people* being unstated but understood)