

Work-life balance

Task 1: Read the profile of a leading executive and answer the questions

- What time does Janet start work in the morning?
- What time does she normally get to the office?
- How long does she take off for lunch?
- Why does she prefer to call people rather than send an email?
- How often does she have to work at the weekend?
- How typical do you think Janet's life is? Does she have a good work-life balance? Why / Why not?

A day in the life of Janet Walls

Janet Walls is the international operations manager of a major telecoms company, with operations in most of Europe and Latin America. Her career has included periods of work in Portugal, Paris and London. She speaks Spanish, French and Russian, as well as English.



'People **often** ask me how I manage to combine a successful career with family life. The secret is that I don't need much sleep! Five hours is enough, so by 5.30 am I am **usually** up, reading reports and checking emails on my smartphone. **Then** I have breakfast at 8 am together with my husband, Derek, and my 15-year-old daughter, Katie.

I go to work in a taxi which picks me up at 8.30 am **every day**. On the way to work I look through the daily papers. It **normally** takes us about 20 minutes to get to the office. When I arrive my secretary joins me, and we go through any correspondence and plan the day. I make decisions about appointments and organize meetings. I drink a lot of coffee and mineral water. I **usually** have just a sandwich for lunch, but I am **never** out for more than an hour. **Then, in the afternoon**, I'm back to work and have more meetings. **Once a month** I take an afternoon off, if it's possible. When I'm not in a meeting I am **constantly** on the phone. I use the phone whenever possible because it's **nearly always** quicker than using email. Even if I'm in the office, I prefer to use my smartphone. I **hardly ever** send text messages except to my daughter – it's just too time-consuming.

I like to pick Katie up from school when I can, but **most days** I work until at least 8 pm. Weekends are reserved for my family. I don't **often** have to work. All in all, it's hard work, but I enjoy my job.'

Task 2: Grammar rules – Frequency adverbs

Look at the examples in the text and complete the rules.

- In most cases, adverbs of frequency (sometimes, often, never, etc.) go _____ the main verb.
- Adverbs of frequency go _____ the verb to be.
- Time phrases (twice a year, every day, etc.) can go at the _____ of a sentence or clause.

Task 3: Practice

Add a word or phrase from the box to each sentence so that it is true for you. You may need to change the verb form.

always • never • sometimes • often • usually • rarely • hardly ever • every day • once a week • twice a year

Example: I go to work by car. → I don't often go to work by car.

- I go to work by car.
- I get home late.
- I work at the weekend.
- I have a holiday.
- I feel bored with my job.
- My boss leaves work before me.
- My computer crashes.
- I find time to relax and enjoy myself.
- I have arguments with people at work.
- I read the financial papers.

Task 4: Partner activity

Complete the 'Action' and 'You' columns in the chart below. Then ask questions to complete the 'Your partner' column.

Action	You	Your partner
get up early		
have breakfast		
go to work by car		
have lunch at work		
work late		
work at the weekend		

Grammar

Expressing frequency

To say how often something happens you can use adverbs of frequency.

always hardly ever never not often often sometimes usually

The adverb comes before the main verb

I		
You	(don't/doesn't) usually	drive(s) to work. go(es) out for lunch.
He	(don't/doesn't) often	
She	sometimes	
We	never	
They		

but after the verb "to be".

I			
You	am	(not) usually	late. tired.
He	are	(not) often	
She	is	sometimes	
We		never	
They			

You can also use time phrases.

every day every week once a day once a week twice a month three times a year

These phrases come at the beginning or end of the sentence/clause.

I		every day.	Every day.	I	
You	have (has) a break go (goes) on holiday	once a day.	Once a day.	you	have (has) a break go (goes) on holiday
He		twice a week.	Twice a week	he	
She		three times a month.	Three times a month	she	
We		four times a year.	Four times a year	we	
They				they	

Assignment: Work-Life Balance and Daily Routine

1. Describe your typical daily routine.
2. Explain what a healthy work-life balance means to you and why you consider this balance essential.
3. Offer at least one practical suggestion for individuals seeking to enhance their work-life balance.