

Certain adverbs or adverbial phrases with a negative or restrictive meaning can be put at the start of a sentence for emphasis or to be more formal or dramatic.

Sentences with modal auxiliary verbs

I will never lend money to Richard again.

I can rarely find the time to read for pleasure.

Position of subject and modal auxiliary verb is reversed

Never again will I lend money to Richard.

Rarely can I find the time to read for pleasure.

Sentences without auxiliary verbs

Richard never does his homework.

I hardly ever see my auntie.

Steve rarely turned up for class on time when he was at uni.

You have to insert do/does/did depending on the tense/subject.

Never does Richard do his homework

Hardly ever do I see my auntie

Rarely did Steve turn up for class on time when he was at uni.

Try these:

1. I have never been to England. (never)
2. I can speak English and Spanish. (not only)
3. I rarely send emails to my friends. (rarely)
4. I will only move out of my parents' house when I go to university. (only when)
5. I don't go to the beach very often. (seldom)

Further examples of inversion:

As soon as I sat down to eat dinner, the phone rang.

I had just got into the shower when the lights went out.

No sooner inverted + than

Hardly/barely/scarcely + when

No sooner had I sat down to eat dinner than the phone rang.

Hardly/barely/scarcely had I got into the shower when the lights went out.

Invert these sentences

1. As soon as my head hit the pillow I fell asleep.
2. I had just left the toilet when an elephant destroyed it.
3. As soon as I got off the plane I ran to a pub and ate fish and chips.

These two inversions are used to talk about prohibitions:

On no account/Under no circumstances + should/must

On no account must you speak to the other candidates.

Under no circumstances should this door be opened while the train is moving.

Make these prohibitions stronger:

1. Don't put metal in the microwave!
2. Kids mustn't play with the guns and bombs.
3. Don't try to fight the lions!

You can use little did + subject know/realise in the past to say "had no idea"

Little did he know that the police were following him.

I had no idea how much danger I was in.

Little did I know how much danger I was in.

They had no idea that their conversation was being recorded.

Little did they know that their conversation was being recorded.

John didn't know that the Gucci handbag was a fake.

Little did he realise that the Gucci handbag was a fake.