

# English syntax

## SECTION 2

ADJECTIVE PHRASE (AP)

ADVERB PHRASE (AdvP)

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE (PP)

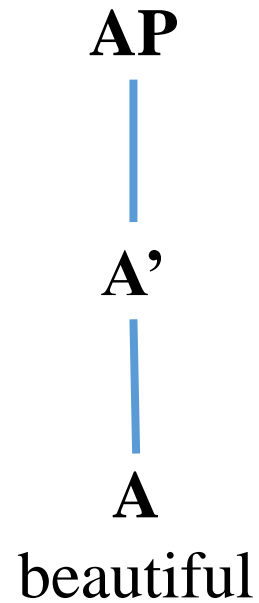
# Adjective phrase

- A typical ADJECTIVE PHRASE has as its head an adjective.
- The head adjective may be **pre-modified** by:
  - **degree adverbs** (intensifying adverbs): *very, highly, extremely, terribly, awfully, completely, much, quite, so, too, rather, somewhat, hardly, fairly, moderately, partially, slightly, increasingly...*
  - **general adverbs** (non-intensifying adverbs): *frankly, potentially, immediately, annoyingly, oddly, disgustingly, amazingly, suspiciously, awkwardly, beautifully...*
- An adjective can take a **complement**: *(be) absent from school, (be) interested in singing, (be) clever at math...*
- An adjective phrase may contain a modifier/clause. This is a correlative structure: **so *adj* that**: *...so tired that he cannot move.*

# The structure of adjective phrase

## A bare adjective

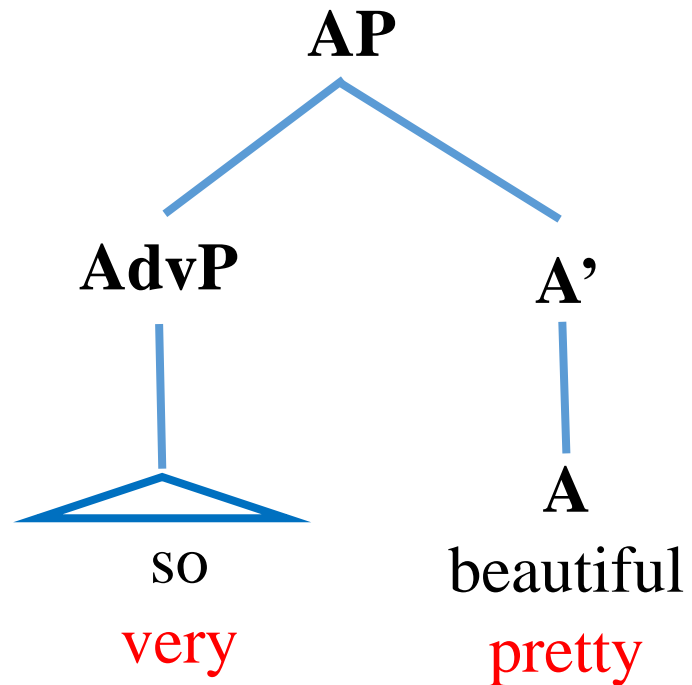
**beautiful**



# The structure of adjective phrase

Adverbs to be the **specifiers** of AP

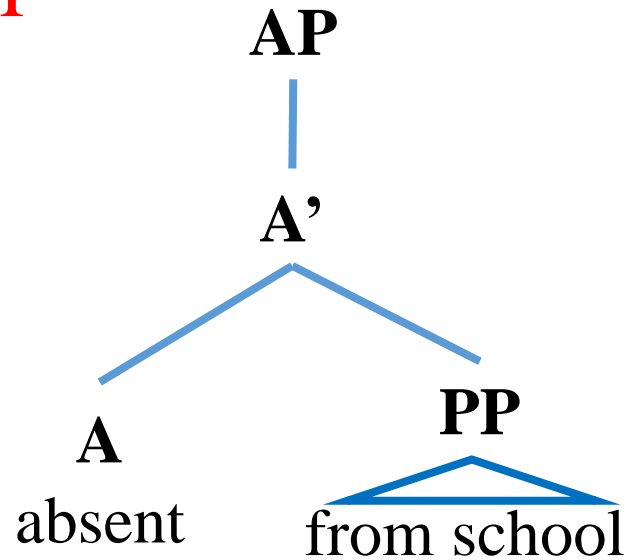
so beautiful  
very pretty



# The structure of adjective phrase

## AP with a complement

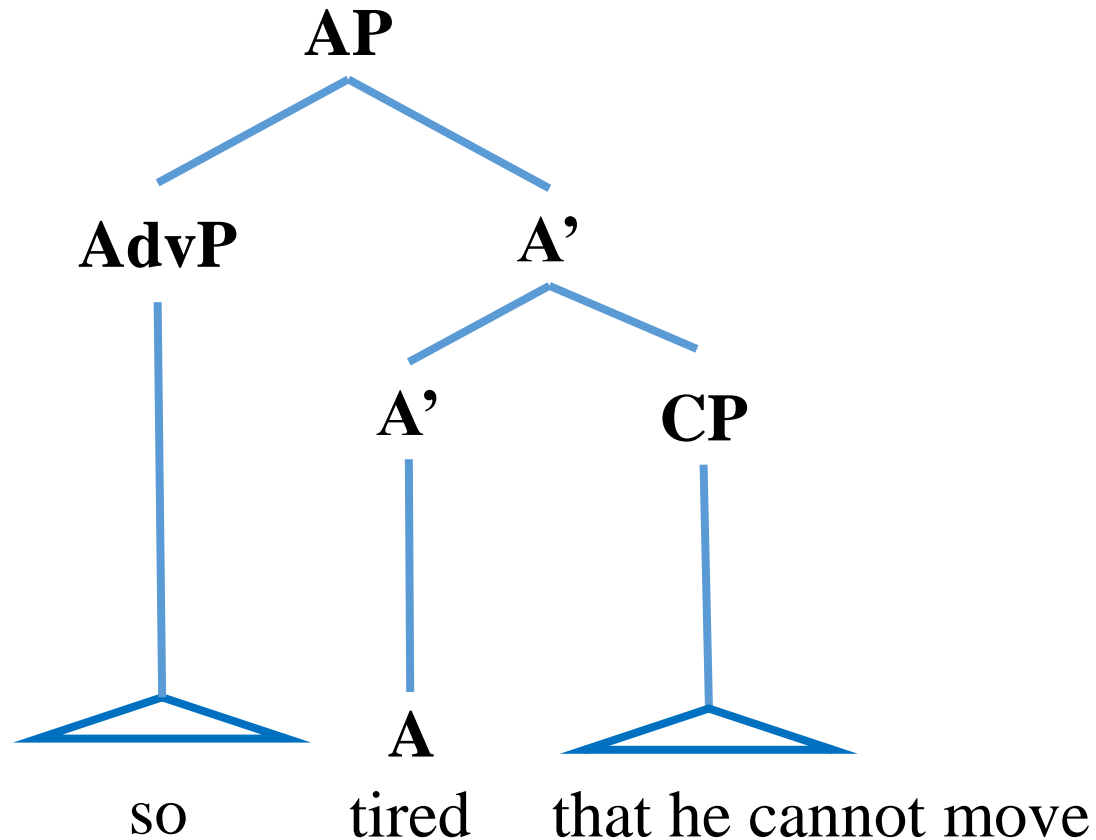
absent from school



# The structure of adjective phrase

AP contains a clause

...so **tired** that he cannot move



# Adverb phrase

- A typical ADVERB PHRASE has as its head an adverb.
- Bare adverbs are very common in English.
- Adverbs may be modified by another adverb: *very quickly, quite wonderfully, horribly fast, incredibly gracefully*
- An adverb can take a complement: *independently of your computer skills*
- An adverb phrase may contain a clause/modifier. This is a correlative structure: **so *adv* that**: ...*so carelessly that she fell down.*

# The structure of adverb phrase

## 1. A bare adverb

**well**

**AdvP**



**Adv'**



**Adv**

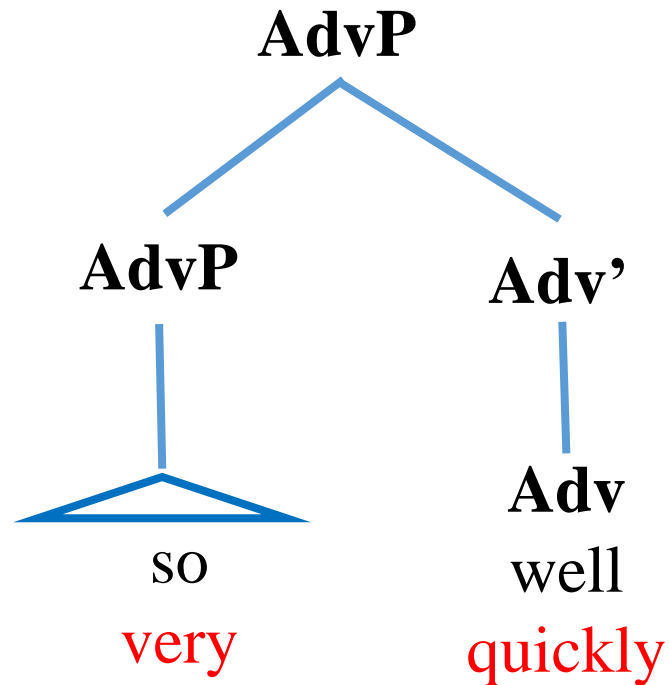
well



# The structure of adverb phrase

Another adverb to be a **specifier**

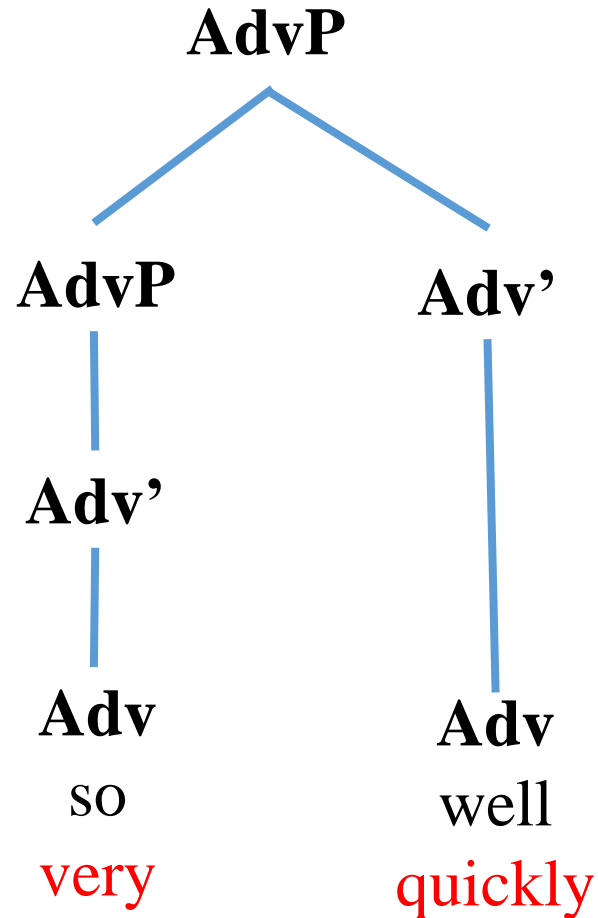
**so well**  
**very quickly**



# The structure of adverb phrase

Another adverb to be a **specifier**

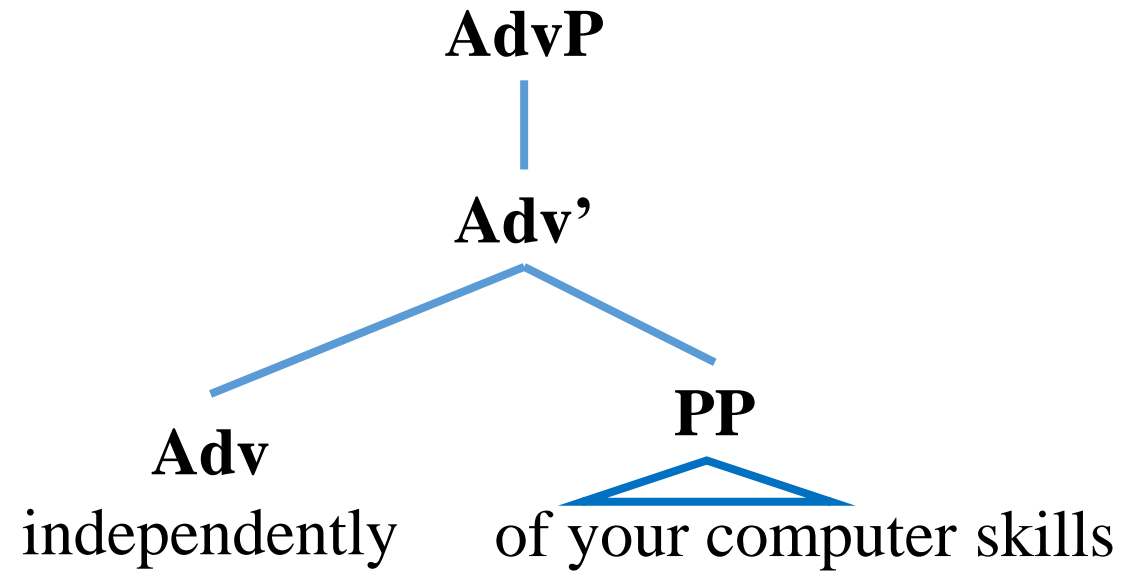
so well  
very quickly



# The structure of adverb phrase

## AdvP with a complement

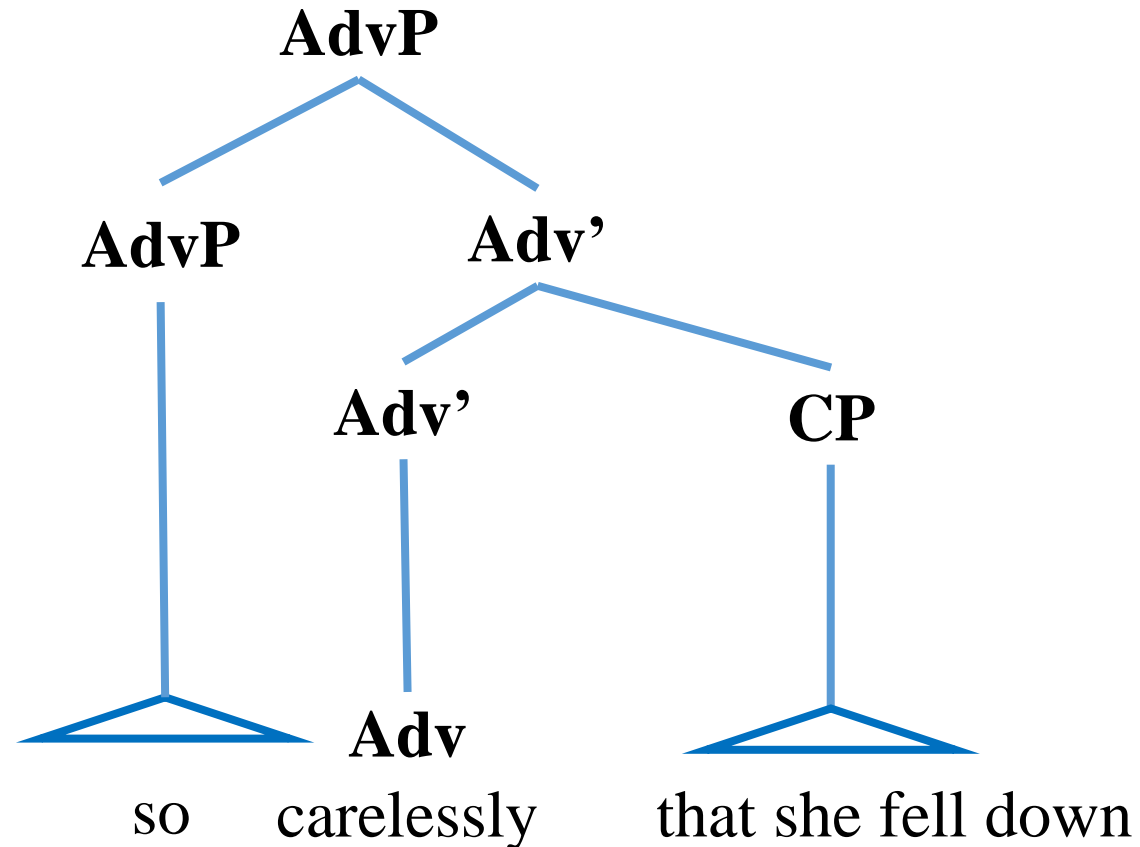
independently of your computer skills



# The structure of adverb phrase

AdvP contains a modifier

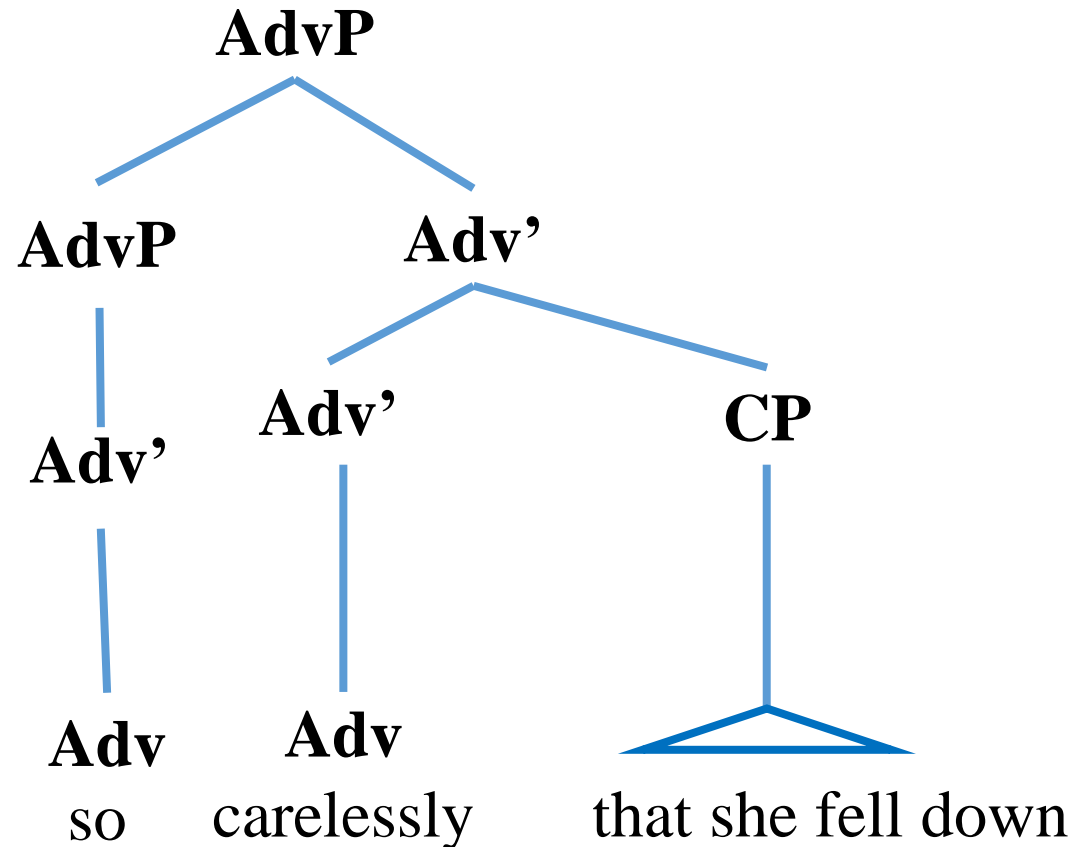
...so carelessly that she fell down



# The structure of adverb phrase

AdvP contains a modifier

...so carelessly that she fell down



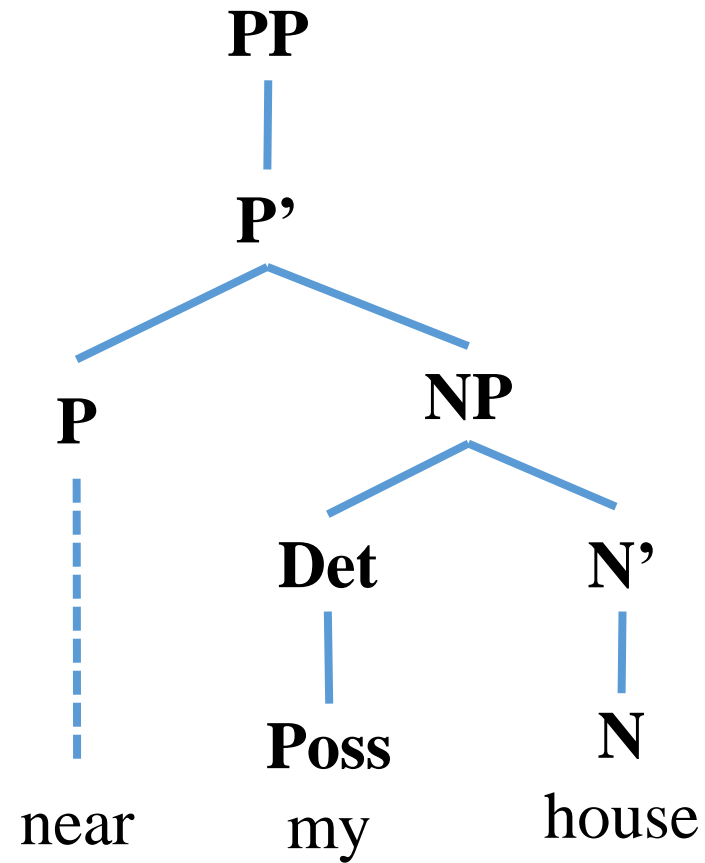
# Prepositional phrase

- A typical PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE has **as its head** a preposition.
- Prepositions are typically transitive, that is, they take a complement: *near the house, after the class, on the table ...*
- Prepositions may be modified by an adverb: *very near the house, right at the corner ...*
- Some prepositions are **complex prepositions**: they take **an PP as a complement**: *close to the bank, away from home ...*
- Some prepositions may function as adverbs. Typically, when used intransitively, they are considered adverbs: *They went very far.*

# The structure of prepositional phrase

## PP with a complement

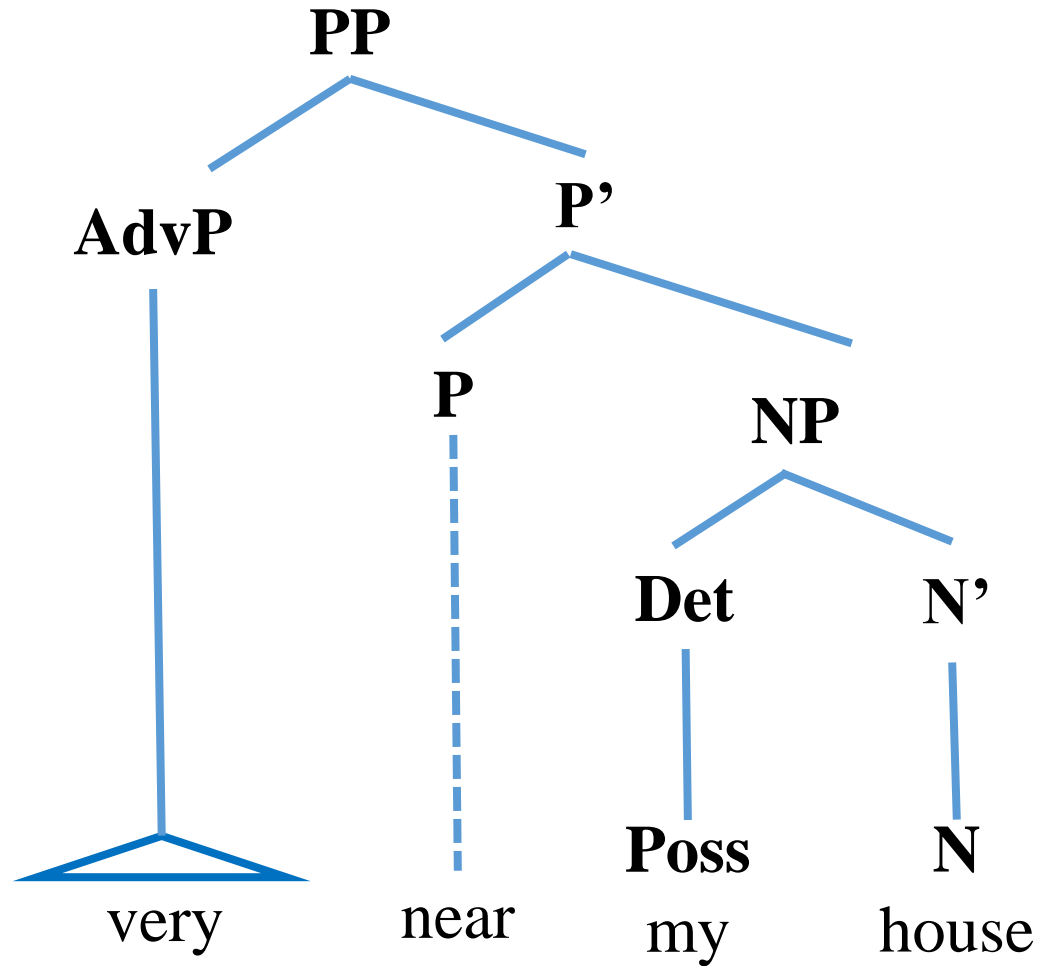
near my house



# The structure of prepositional phrase

An adverb to be a **specifier** of PP

very near my house

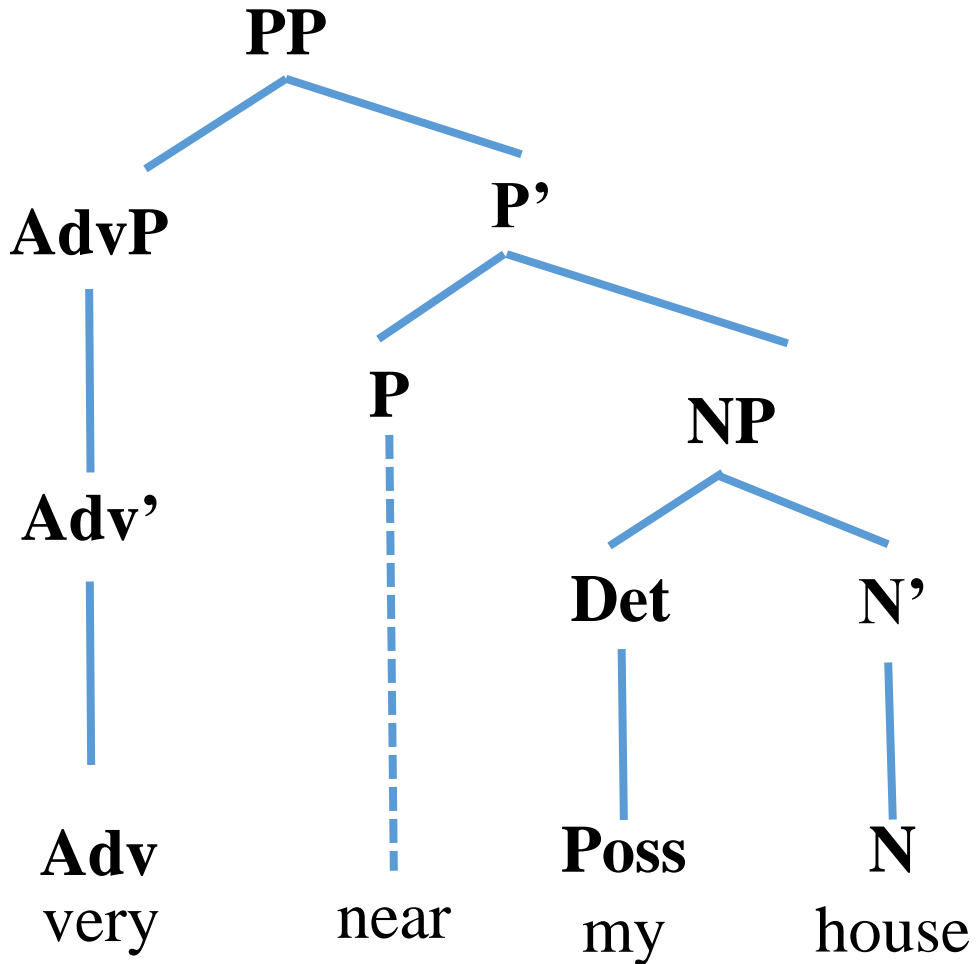




# The structure of prepositional phrase

An adverb to be a **specifier** of PP

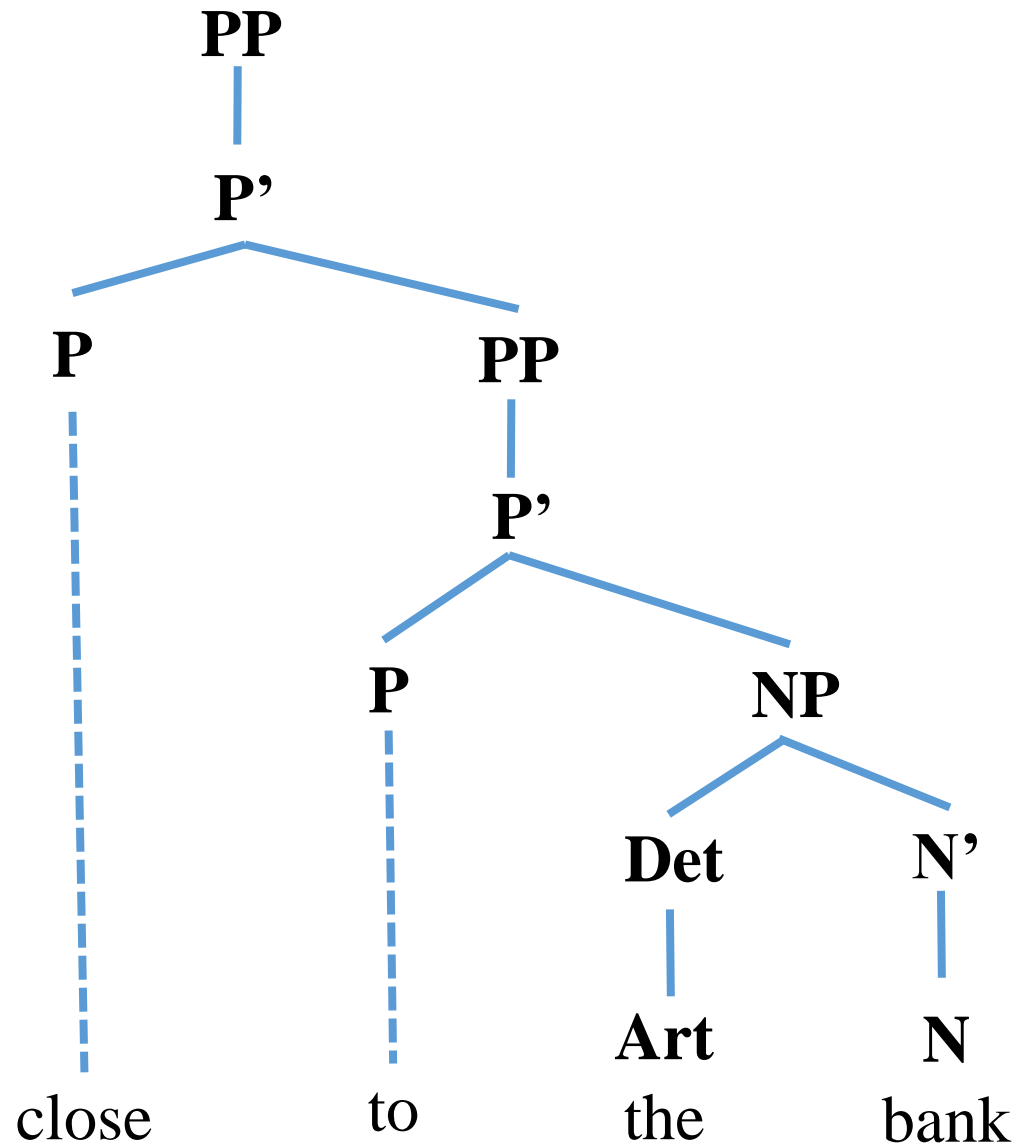
very near my house



# The structure of prepositional phrase

## Another PP as a complement

close to the bank



# Exercise

1. so well
2. too slowly
3. extremely good
4. successful in business
5. so far from home
6. worry about her weight
7. sing in their big garden at the weekend
8. gave my nice girlfriend a new dress