

Fronting

We usually begin sentences with their grammatical subject. But sometimes we move things to the front for emphasis.

- Crazy, that driver. (More emphatic than 'That driver is crazy.')

Moving something to the beginning of a sentence in this way is called fronting. Fronting is very common in *informal speech*. The words that are usually fronted are *objects* and *complements*.

- A very nice time we had yesterday. (= Yesterday we had a very nice time.)
- Nice people they are! (= They are nice people.)
- Lovely she is! (=She is lovely)

Question-word clauses are also often fronted.

- How she got the goods through customs I don't understand. (= I don't understand how she got the goods through customs.)
- What I should do now I don't know. (= I don't know what I should do now.)

Adverbs and adverb particles

Adverbs and adverb particles are often fronted when giving instructions to small children.

- Down you come!
- Off we go!
- Out you come!
- Back you go to your study.

Another reason for fronting adverbs is for emphasis.

- Now you tell me! (= Why didn't you tell me before?)

Examples and Observations:

• "Before the march of the flames were flung picket lines of soldiers."

(Jack London, "Story of an Eyewitness: The San Francisco Earthquake," *Collier's Weekly*, May 3, 1906)

• "Powerful you have become Dooku, the dark side I sense in you."

(Yoda, *Star Wars: Episode II—Attack of the Clones*, 2002)