Many years ago, a friend challenged me to name an adjective, as opposed to an adverb, ending in LY. I do not recall if I succeeded, but the problem remained in my subconscious, and has surfaced at irregular intervals ever since. Occasionally I would sit down and mentally compose a list of ten or fifteen such words, each time trying to surpass my last effort.

The most recent time this notion emerged, it became obsessive. I found myself compiling lists as I drove, as I swam, during business meetings, during meals; and sometimes when I woke my mind would play back the list I had composed while asleep. I passed the 50 mark the first hour, the 100 mark the first day, and the 200 mark within the week.

Now that the birthing is over, I present the results for your delectation, neatly parcelled by meaning or type of construct. The first class of LY adjectives I found dealt with personal appearance:

- burly
- comely
- gangly
- homely
- lovely
- portly
- roly-poly
- sightly
- stately
- ugly
- sightly

It is well to mention that I have avoided including the negated forms, such as UNSIGHTLY, except in the case of UNRULY, where the positive form is obscure. Also, where a word seemed to fit several categories, I made an arbitrary choice.

The immediate extension of appearance was to other types of characterizations of people. Such words are:

- elderly
- friendly
- gainly
- godly
- holy
- jolly
- kindly
- lively
- lonely
- lowly
- mannerly
- poorly
- sickly
- silly
- slovenly
- sprightly
- surly
- weakly
- willy
- woolly
- worldly
- surly
- unrule

Many characterizations are of the form xxxly, where xxx is some category of person forming a role-model for the behavior described. The construct means 'in the manner of xxx':

- bastardly
- beggarly
- brotherly
- cowardly
- currmudgely
- dastardly
- daughtery
- fatherly
- beastly
- churchly
- biweekly
- bimonthly
- easterly
- to which other
- southeasterly
- These are complemented by
- hourly
- daily
- we may apply
- biweekly
- bimonthly
- and all their
- eastly
- to which other
- southeastly
- and all their
- westly
- to which other
- northly
- to which other
- these are complemented by
- weekly
- monthly
- yearly
- these are complemented by
- bubblily
- bustily
- chillily
- crackly
- crawly
- crumbly
- cuddly
- curply
- drawly
- dribbly
- droolily
To these, we may add a few words derived from nonhuman characterizations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beastly</td>
<td>courtly</td>
<td>earthy</td>
<td>ghostly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>churchly</td>
<td>deathly</td>
<td>ghastly</td>
<td>heavenly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two rich sources of LY adjectives are time and direction. From the basic stock of:

- **hourly**
- **daily**
- **nightly**
- **weekly**
- **monthly**
- **quarterly**
- **yearly**

we may apply a variety of modifiers to obtain:

- **biweekly**
- **semimonthly**
- **twice-daily**
- **half-yearly**
- **bimonthly**
- **semiyearly**
- **twice-weekly**
- **three-weekly**

and all their permutations. In directions, we have the primary:

- **easterly**
- **westerly**
- **northerly**
- **southerly**

and to which other points of the compass may be added:

- **southeasterly**
- **south-southwesterly**
- **north-by-north-northwesterly**

These are complemented by an equally-large set in which ERLY is replaced by WARDLY.

By far the most abundant source of LY adjectives is nouns and verbs ending in the sound L, whether spelled L, EL, LE, LL or otherwise:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
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<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bubbly</td>
<td>fiddly</td>
<td>jowly</td>
<td>scraggly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bustly</td>
<td>frilly</td>
<td>mealy</td>
<td>scrawlly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chilly</td>
<td>giggly</td>
<td>nubbly</td>
<td>scowly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crackly</td>
<td>gnarly</td>
<td>oily</td>
<td>smelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crawly</td>
<td>gravelly</td>
<td>pearly</td>
<td>smily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crumblly</td>
<td>gristly</td>
<td>prickly</td>
<td>sniffly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crumplly</td>
<td>grizzly</td>
<td>rattly</td>
<td>snivelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuddly</td>
<td>growly</td>
<td>ravelly</td>
<td>snuffly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curly</td>
<td>grumbly</td>
<td>rilly</td>
<td>snuggly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drawly</td>
<td>hilly</td>
<td>ruffly</td>
<td>sparkly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dribbly</td>
<td>howly</td>
<td>rusty</td>
<td>spindly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drooly</td>
<td>jiggly</td>
<td>scaly</td>
<td>squally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
squeally swirly topply wiggly
steely tickly twinkly wobbly
straggly tippily whirly wriggly

There is a small residue of words that did not fit easily into any of the chosen categories:

bally deadly grisly only
bully early likely timely
costly goodly lily

How many LY adjectives are there? Can we ever know? Yes, we can! The number is infinite, or, as mathematicians say, unbounded. This is shown by exhibiting two families of LY adjectives, each having an unlimited number of members. The first family was seen before, namely DAILY, TWICE-DAILY, THRICE-DAILY, FOUR-TIMES-DAILY, and so forth. The other, which is somewhat more satisfying, is ONE-PLY, TWO-PLY, THREE-PLY, FOUR-PLY, ad infinitum.

Having now shown an indefinitely long list of LY adjectives, I can now rest, assured that no reader can ever top me by finding a longer one.

THE 4-STAR PUZZLER

This is the name of a new monthly magazine of 12 pages, started in January 1981 by the editors of Games magazine, designed to be "the most challenging popular puzzle publication in the United States". Word Ways readers will be interested to hear that nearly all of the magazine is devoted to word puzzles. Some of these are well-known (standard and cryptic crosswords, cryptograms, acrostics) but others are less commonly encountered (a variant of the diagramless puzzle known as "battleships", a petal-shaped crossword, picture rebuses of the style popular in the 1930s, and Enigma-type rhymed puzzles originally published between 1822 and 1942). Non-puzzle material includes book reviews (one on Word Recreations, an anthology of Word Ways articles) and biographies (Eugene Maleska, N. Y. Times crossword puzzle editor). A one-year subscription (PO Box 10149, Des Moines IA 50349) is available for $9.97 (Canadian or foreign, add $2).

EDWARD R.
Brookline, MA

When the heretofore misused booster, it's not a verb, is a noun, set comes from this word's Third

Give up? See...

1. goosey
2. desir-
3. cheek
4. heart
5. see-
6. abund-
7. abund-
8. waste
9. deer
to.
10. chair
11. guan
c
12. vas-
c
13. dogbe-
14. parsley
15. skin of
16. wasp e
17. balcony
18. spores
19. pregna
20. ... and...