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C1 · WORD ORDER · ≈ 27 MIN

Inversion after Negative Adverbials – *practice on paper*

You know formal negative inversion; now reinforce word order, connectors, and register with fresh examples.

After a negative opener, formal English usually uses **auxiliary + subject**; lexical verbs need **do**.

NAME _____ DATE _____

YOUR BUILD: 1 · SORTING ○ | 2 · FILL-IN ○ | 3 · CORRECT ○ | 4 · WRITE ○

BRICK 1 · SORT BY WORD ORDER · APPROX. 4 MIN ●○○

Sort each sentence: neutral statement order on the left, **negative inversion** with formal emphasis on the right.

- Clients rarely request paper invoices.
- We have never delayed a tax filing.
- The rollout had hardly begun when demand rose.
- We not only reduced errors but also saved time.
- Our directors seldom reject a clear proposal.
- Rarely do vendors change signed terms.
- Never has this dashboard shown a false total.
- Hardly had the session begun when alarms rang.
- Not only did Lara solve it, but she logged it.
- No sooner had voting ended than results leaked.

NEUTRAL STATEMENT ORDER	FORMAL NEGATIVE INVERSION

BRICK 2 · COMPLETE THE AUXILIARY · APPROX. 6 MIN ●●○

Add the correct auxiliary. Check tense, subject, and the relevant **connector pair**.

01 Seldom _____ our regional offices need extra support these days.
02 Never _____ the chair rejected a unanimous decision so far this year.
03 Hardly _____ the call ended when legal replied.
04 No sooner _____ we signed than the supplier announced a delay.
05 Not only _____ the update reduce waste, but it also saved time.
06 Rarely _____ this committee meet outside its regular schedule these days.
07 Never _____ I heard a clearer investor pitch to date.
08 Seldom _____ a renewal take this long these days.

YOUR BUILD

1 · SORTING ○ | 2 · FILL-IN ○ | 3 · CORRECT ○ | 4 · WRITE ○

BRICK 3 · FIND AND CORRECT THE MISTAKE · APPROX. 7 MIN ●●○

Each sentence contains one error in inversion, verb form, or connector. Rewrite the full sentence correctly.

01 Rarely the board changes a published agenda.

02 Never I have received such a clear summary.

03 Hardly had we opened the doors than guests arrived.

04 No sooner had we agreed when finance objected.

05 Not only did Amir found the bug, but he also fixed it.

06 Seldom does the manager approves overtime.

BRICK 4 · WRITE FOR THE RIGHT REGISTER · APPROX. 8 MIN ●●●

Write one English sentence for each prompt. Use inversion only where **formal emphasis** fits.

01 Annual report: highlight an achievement with Never.

02 Presentation: state a rare observation with Rarely.

03 Incident report: link two rapid events with Hardly or No sooner.

04 Team chat: express the same observation in neutral statement order.

MINI-CHECK — CAN I DO THIS YET?

- ☐ I place the auxiliary before the subject after a negative opener.
- ☐ I use do, does, or did with lexical verbs and keep the main verb in its base form.
- ☐ I pair Hardly with when and No sooner with than.
- ☐ I choose inversion deliberately for formal writing or presentations, not automatically.

Unsure? Mark the opener, auxiliary, and subject first; then check the register.

Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why** — the rule matters more than the result.

BRICK 1 · SORTING

01 Clients rarely request paper invoices.
Statement order: The subject comes before the verb.

02 We have never delayed a tax filing.
Statement order: Never sits inside the verb phrase.

03 The rollout had hardly begun when demand rose.
Statement order: Hardly follows the auxiliary.

04 We not only reduced errors but also saved time.
Statement order: Not only does not open the clause.

05 Our directors seldom reject a clear proposal.
Statement order: Seldom follows the subject.

06 Rarely do vendors change signed terms.
Inversion: Rarely brings do before the subject.

07 Never has this dashboard shown a false total.
Inversion: Has follows Never before the subject.

08 Hardly had the session begun when alarms rang.
Inversion: Fronted Hardly is followed by had.

09 Not only did Lara solve it, but she logged it.
Inversion: Not only opens the first clause.

10 No sooner had voting ended than results leaked.
Inversion: No sooner combines with had and than.

BRICK 2 · FILL-IN

01 Seldom **do** our regional offices need extra support these days.
Time cue: These days calls for do in present simple.

02 Never **has** the chair rejected a unanimous decision so far this year.
Time cue: So far this year calls for present perfect here.

03 Hardly **had** the call ended when legal replied.
Sequence: Hardly uses past perfect here.

04 No sooner **had** we signed than the supplier announced a delay.
Sequence: No sooner links had with than.

05 Not only **did** the update reduce waste, but it also saved time.
Form rule: Did carries past time; reduce stays unchanged.

06 Rarely **does** this committee meet outside its regular schedule these days.
Time cue: These days calls for does in present simple.

07 Never **have** I heard a clearer investor pitch to date.
Time cue: To date calls for present perfect here.

08 Seldom **does** a renewal take this long these days.
Form rule: These days sets the sentence in the present.

BRICK 3 · CORRECT

01 Rarely **does the board change** a published agenda.
Inversion: The lexical verb needs does and the base form.

02 Never **have I received** such a clear summary.
Inversion: Have comes before the subject I.

03 Hardly had we opened the doors **when** guests arrived.
Connector: Hardly pairs with when.

04 No sooner had we agreed **than** finance objected.
Connector: No sooner pairs with than.

05 Not only did Amir **find** the bug, but he also fixed it.
Form rule: Did is followed by the base form.

06 Seldom does the manager **approve** overtime.
Form rule: Does carries the ending; approve stays unchanged.

BRICK 4 · WRITE

Answers vary; check word order, connector, and register.

01 Never **has our unit missed** a statutory filing date.
Register: Inversion formally highlights an achievement.

02 Rarely **does a pilot project attract** this much interest.
Register: Rarely adds deliberate presentation emphasis.

03 Hardly **had we restored** access when a new alert appeared.
Sequence: Hardly links the earlier step with when.

04 Our regional teams **rarely need** weekend support.
Register: Neutral order usually sounds more natural in team chat.

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