The words *backward, backwards, forward, forwards, outward, outwards* etc can be used as adjectives and adverbs.

**As adjectives**

When these words are used as adjectives, they don’t have the *-s* ending. That means we can’t use forwards, backwards, outwards etc as adjectives. Instead we use forward, backward, outward etc.

There are many *backward* countries in Africa. (NOT There are many backwards countries in Africa. Here backward is used as an adjective modifying the noun countries.)

He is *backward* in his studies. (NOT He is backwards in his studies.)

**Forward** passes are not allowed in rugby. (NOT Forwards passes are not allowed in rugby.)

She was seen riding in a *northward* direction.

**As adverbs**

When these words are used as adverbs, they can be used *with or without the -s ending*. While the forms with *-s* are more common in British English, the forms without *-s* are usually used in American English.

Go *upwards*. OR Go *upward*.

Why are you moving *backwards* and *forwards*? OR Why are you moving *backward* and *forward*?

In expressions like *look forward to, put forward* and *bring forward*, the form without *-s* is always used.

We are *looking forward to* your next visit. (NOT We are looking forwards to your next visit.)