

## COMPARATIVES (PART 1)

**A**

Study these examples:

How shall we travel? Shall we drive or go by train?

Let's drive. It's **cheaper**.

Don't go by train. It's **more expensive**.

**Cheaper** and **more expensive** are *comparative* forms.

After comparatives you can use **than** (see Unit 107):

- ☐ It's **cheaper** to drive **than** go by train.
- ☐ Going by train is **more expensive than** driving.



**B**

The comparative form is **-er** or **more** ...

We use **-er** for short words (one syllable):

**cheap** → cheaper      **fast** → faster  
**large** → larger      **thin** → thinner

We also use **-er** for two-syllable words that end in **-y** (**-y** → **ier**):

**lucky** → luckier      **early** → earlier  
**easy** → easier      **pretty** → prettier

For spelling, see Appendix 6.

We use **more** ... for longer words (two syllables or more):

**more serious**      **more often**  
**more expensive**      **more comfortable**

We also use **more** ... for adverbs that end in **-ly**:

**more slowly**      **more seriously**  
**more easily**      **more quietly**

Compare these examples:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> You're <b>older</b> than me.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The exam was quite easy – <b>easier</b> than I expected.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can you walk a bit <b>faster</b>?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to have a <b>bigger</b> car.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Last night I went to bed <b>earlier</b> than usual.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> You're <b>more patient</b> than me.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The exam was quite difficult – <b>more difficult</b> than I expected.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can you walk a bit <b>more slowly</b>?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to have a <b>more reliable</b> car.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I don't play tennis much these days. I used to play <b>more often</b>.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

You can use **-er** or **more** ... with some two-syllable adjectives, especially:

**clever**    **narrow**    **quiet**    **shallow**    **simple**

- ☐ It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere **quieter** / **more quiet**?

**C**

A few adjectives and adverbs have irregular comparative forms:

**good/well** → **better**

- ☐ The garden looks **better** since you tidied it up.
- ☐ I know him **well** – probably **better** than anybody else knows him.

**bad/badly** → **worse**

- ☐ 'How's your headache? Better?' 'No, it's **worse**.'
- ☐ He did very badly in the exam – **worse** than expected.

**far** → **further** (or **farther**)

- ☐ It's a long walk from here to the park – **further** than I thought. (or **farther** than)

**Further** (but *not* farther) can also mean 'more' or 'additional':

- ☐ Let me know if you hear any **further** news. (= any more news)

## Exercises

### 105.1 Complete the sentences using a comparative form (older / more important etc.).

- 1 It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere quieter ?
- 2 This coffee is very weak. I like it .....
- 3 The hotel was surprisingly big. I expected it to be .....
- 4 The hotel was surprisingly cheap. I expected it to be .....
- 5 The weather is too cold here. I'd like to live somewhere .....
- 6 My job is a bit boring sometimes. I'd like to do something .....
- 7 It's a shame you live so far away. I wish you lived .....
- 8 I was surprised how easy it was to get a job. I thought it would be .....
- 9 Your work isn't very good. I'm sure you can do .....
- 10 Don't worry. The situation isn't so bad. It could be .....
- 11 I was surprised we got here so quickly. I expected the trip to take .....
- 12 You're talking very loudly. Can you speak ..... ?
- 13 You hardly ever call me. Why don't you call me ..... ?
- 14 You're standing too near the camera. Can you move a bit ..... away?
- 15 You were a little depressed yesterday, but you look ..... today.

### 105.2 Complete the sentences. Use the comparative forms of the words in the box. Use **than** where necessary.

<b>big</b>	<b>crowded</b>	<del>early</del>	<b>easily</b>	<b>high</b>	<b>important</b>
<b>interested</b>	<b>peaceful</b>	<del>reliable</del>	<b>serious</b>	<b>simple</b>	<b>thin</b>

- 1 I was feeling tired last night, so I went to bed earlier than usual.
- 2 I'd like to have a more reliable car. The one I have keeps breaking down.
- 3 Unfortunately her illness was ..... we thought at first.
- 4 You look ..... Have you lost weight?
- 5 I want a ..... apartment. We don't have enough space here.
- 6 He doesn't study very hard. He's ..... in having a good time.
- 7 Health and happiness are ..... money.
- 8 The instructions were very complicated. They could have been .....
- 9 There were a lot of people on the bus. It was ..... usual.
- 10 I like living in the country. It's ..... living in a town.
- 11 You'll find your way around the town ..... if you have a good map.
- 12 In some parts of the country, prices are ..... in others.

### 105.3 Read the situations and complete the sentences. Use a comparative form (-er or more ...).

- 1 Yesterday the temperature was six degrees. Today it's only three degrees.  
It's colder today than it was yesterday.
- 2 The journey takes four hours by car and five hours by train.  
It takes ..... by car.
- 3 Dan and I went for a run. I ran ten kilometres. Dan stopped after eight kilometres.  
I ran ..... Dan.
- 4 Chris and Joe both did badly in the test. Chris got 30%, but Joe only got 25%.  
Joe did ..... Chris in the test.
- 5 I expected my friends to arrive at about 4 o'clock. In fact they arrived at 2.30.  
My friends ..... I expected.
- 6 You can go by bus or by train. The buses run every 30 minutes. The trains run every hour.  
The buses ..... the trains.
- 7 We were very busy in the office today. We're not usually so busy.  
We ..... usual in the office today.