

31 Superlative adjectives



Lots of people enjoy going on roller coasters. Kingda Ka is **the highest and the fastest**. But many people think Eejanaika is **the most exciting** roller coaster in the world.

1 Form

To make superlative adjectives:

ADJECTIVE	→	SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVE
most short adjectives (1 syllable)	add -est	<i>small</i> → <i>smallest</i> , <i>young</i> → <i>youngest</i> , <i>high</i> → <i>highest</i> , <i>fast</i> → <i>fastest</i>
adjectives that end in -e	add -st	<i>late</i> → <i>latest</i> , <i>nice</i> → <i>nicest</i> , <i>wide</i> → <i>widest</i>
adjectives that end in vowel + consonant, e.g. -ig, -at, -ot, -in	add another consonant + -est	<i>big</i> → <i>biggest</i> , <i>fat</i> → <i>fattest</i> , <i>hot</i> → <i>hottest</i> , <i>thin</i> → <i>thinnest</i>
adjectives that end in -y	change y to i and add -est	<i>dry</i> → <i>driest</i> , <i>happy</i> → <i>happiest</i> , <i>early</i> → <i>earliest</i>

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For most adjectives with two or more syllables (e.g. *useful*, *difficult*, *expensive*) we use *the most* + adjective:

Eejanaika is **the most exciting** roller coaster. My mobile phone is **the most useful** thing I own.

The opposite of *the most* is *the least*. We usually use *the least* with adjectives with two or more syllables: *Excuse me. Which is the least expensive phone you sell?*



These adjectives have irregular superlative forms:

bad → *worst*, *good* → *best*, *far* → *farthest/furthest*

✗ *He's the most good student in the class.* ✓ *He's the best student in the class.*

2 Use

We use superlative adjectives when we compare one person/thing with several others.



We use *the* before superlative adjectives:

✗ *Kingda Ka is fastest roller coaster.* ✓ *Kingda Ka is the fastest roller coaster.*



After superlative adjectives we use *in* before the names of places and groups:

✗ *Eejanaika is the most exciting roller coaster of the world.*

✓ *Eejanaika is the most exciting roller coaster in the world.*

We can also use *my/your/his*, etc. before superlative adjectives:

Jenny is my oldest friend. What is your happiest memory?

We often use superlative adjectives + *I've ever ...*, *you've ever ...*, etc. to talk about our experiences:

That was the best book I've ever read. What's the most expensive thing you've ever bought?

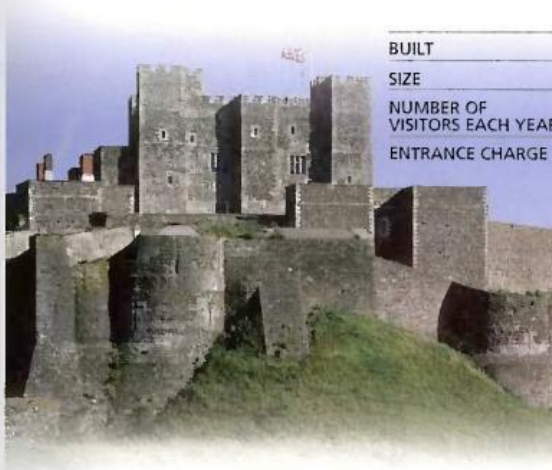
Practice

- 1 Write the missing words in the box. Then complete the sentences below.
Use some of the words from the box.

adjective	<i>fast</i>	<i>friendly</i>	<i>happy</i>		<i>late</i>	<i>dry</i>		<i>bad</i>	<i>far</i>
superlative	<i>fastest</i>			<i>nicest</i>			<i>best</i>		

Complete these sentences.

- 0 That was the *worst* meal I've ever eaten. It was disgusting!
 - 1 July is usually the month in my country. It never rains then.
 - 2 Milo is the student in my class. He talks to everybody.
 - 3 Neptune is the planet from the sun.
 - 4 The time you can arrive is six o'clock. We close the doors after that.
- 2 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Read the information about three British castles. Complete the questions with a superlative form of the adjectives in brackets (). Then answer the questions.



	Dover Castle	Edinburgh Castle	Windsor Castle
BUILT	1050	600	1070
SIZE	175,000 sq m	140,000 sq m	45,000 sq m
NUMBER OF VISITORS EACH YEAR	301,000	1,214,000	900,000
ENTRANCE CHARGE	£9.80	£11.00	£14.00

- 0 Which is *the most expensive* (expensive) castle to visit? *Windsor Castle*
- 1 Which is (old) castle?
- 2 Which castle is (popular)?
- 3 Which castle is (small)?
- 4 Which castle is (big)?
- 5 Which castle has (low) entrance charge?

- 3 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Choose the correct words in *italics* in the conversation.

LOUIS So, Carol. Did you enjoy your holiday?
 CAROL Yes. It was the (0) *better* / (*best*) holiday I've ever had!
 LOUIS Really? What was the (1) *most good* / *best* part?
 CAROL Well, the hotel was fantastic, but the coast was really beautiful.
 LOUIS And what was the (2) *most beautiful* / *beautifullest* place?
 CAROL Definitely the beach. It was the (3) *most warm* / *warmest* water I've ever swum in.
 And there were some good restaurants in the town. The Thai restaurant was
 (4) *nicest* / *the nicest* one, although it was the (5) *furthest* / *most far* from the hotel.
 LOUIS Was that the best one (6) *in* / *of* the town?
 CAROL Yes, and it was the (7) *less* / *least* expensive one there! The Italian restaurant
 was the (8) *most* / *more* expensive one, but it wasn't very nice.