

Comparative/Superlative Adjectives

Comparatives and Superlatives are special forms of adjectives. They are used to compare two or more things. Generally, comparatives are formed using -er and superlatives are formed using -est. This part will explain the rules for forming comparatives and superlatives, and also show some basic ways of using them.

Forming regular comparatives and superlatives

How these forms are created depends on how many syllables there are in the adjective.

Adjective form	Comparative	Superlative
Only one syllable , ending in "E". Examples: wide, fine, cute	Add -R wider, finer, cuter	Add -ST widest, finest, cutest
Only one syllable , with one vowel and one consonant at the end. Examples: hot, big, fat	Double the consonant, and add -ER: hotter, bigger, fatter	Double the consonant, and add -EST: hottest, biggest, fattest
Only one syllable , with more than one vowel or more than one consonant at the end. Examples: light, neat, fast	Add -ER: lighter, neater, faster	Add -EST: lightest, neatest, fastest
Two syllables , ending in Y. Examples: happy, silly, lonely	Change Y to I, then add -ER: happier, sillier, lonelier	Change Y to I, then add -EST: happiest, silliest, loneliest
Two syllables or more , not ending in Y. Examples: modern, interesting, beautiful	Use MORE before the adjective: more modern, more interesting, more beautiful	Use MOST before the adjective: most modern, most interesting, most beautiful

Use

Comparatives are used to compare two things. You can use sentences with than, or you can use a conjunction like but.

- Fatima is taller than Ghaya.
- Ghaya is tall, but Fatima is taller.

Superlatives are used to compare more than two things. Superlative sentences usually use the, because there is only one superlative.

- Sana is the tallest in the class.
- Ghaya is tall, and Fatima is taller, but Sana is the tallest.

Equatives - as...as

The structure "as...as" is used to compare things that are equal. For example:

- Ahmed is 163cm and Ali is 163cm. Ahmed is as tall as Ali.
- This house is 40 years old, that house is also 40 years old. This house is as old as that house.
- Bach's music is as good as Mozart's.
- Spring is as warm as fall.

Practice

Choose the correct answer from a, b, c, or d:

1. It's _____ than I thought.

- a. good
- b. better
- c. gooder
- d. best

2. Brazil is _____ England.

- a. big than
- b. bigger as
- c. bigger than
- d. big as

3. She is _____ in the class.

- a. the best
- b. best
- c. better than
- d. as good as

4. I'm not as successful _____ she is.

- a. as
- b. like
- c. than
- d. that

5. That French restaurant that we went to yesterday was _____ the Italian restaurant we always go.

- a. more expensive
- b. the more expensive
- c. as expensive as
- d. as expensive than

6. She finished _____ than everyone else.

- a. more quickly
- b. quickest
- c. quickly
- d. as quickly as

7. It was _____ test I have ever done.

- a. the most hard
- b. the harder
- c. the hardest
- d. as hard as

8. There were _____ people at the game than expected.

- a. many
- b. more
- c. most
- d. the most

9. This is the _____ kitchen I've ever seen.

- a. dirtiest
- b. dirtyest
- c. dirtier
- d. as dirty as

10. She talks _____ you do.

- a. the most
- b. as more as
- c. the more
- d. more than

“Too” and “Enough”

Enough means a satisfactory amount or degree.

- I'm so busy, I haven't got enough time.
- Do you have enough potatoes?

Enough comes after adjectives and adverbs:

- This jacket isn't big enough for me.
- She speaks English well enough to go to an American university.

Enough usually comes before nouns:

- We have enough money to buy our own apartment.

We often use **enough...for**, especially with people and things. For example:

- This job isn't good enough for her.
- We have enough time for a quick lunch.

Enough...to + infinitive is also a common structure. For example:

- She's old enough to drive a car.
- We have enough time to eat some lunch.

Too means more than enough, an excessive amount or degree. **Too** usually means there is a problem. For example:

- This room is too hot. He eats too quickly.

Too is also used with for: For example:

- This book is too simple for me.
- Our apartment is too small for us.

Too...to + infinitive is also a common structure. For example:

- This book is too easy to study.
- Our apartment is too small to live in.

Too does not have the same meaning as very.

- My desk is very big. (*This is just a comment on the size of my desk.*)
- My desk is too big. (*There is a problem with the size of my desk.*)

Practice

Choose the correct answer from a, b, c, or d:

1. That man is _____ poor to buy a car.

- a. enough
- b. too
- c. very
- d. for

2. I am just _____ tired to work anymore.

- a. too
- b. very
- c. enough
- d. quite

3. Is this box light _____ for you to carry?

- a. very
- b. too
- c. extremely
- d. enough

4. Do you have _____ money for emergencies?

- a. enough
- b. too
- c. very
- d. really

5. We don't get enough sleep because we have _____ much to do.

- a. too
- b. enough
- c. very
- d. fair