

A Look at these examples:

What is **the longest** river in the world?
What was **the most enjoyable** holiday you've ever had?

Longest and **most enjoyable** are *superlative forms*.

The superlative form is **-est** or **most** In general, we use **-est** for short words and **most** ... for longer words.

long → **longest** **hot** → **hottest** **easy** → **easiest** **hard** → **hardest**
but **most** famous **most** boring **most** enjoyable **most** difficult

A few superlative forms are irregular:

good → **best** **bad** → **worst** **far** → **furthest** or **farthest**

The rules are the same as those for the comparative – see Unit 105.
For spelling, see Appendix 6.

B We normally use **the** (or **my/your** etc.) with a superlative:

- Yesterday was **the hottest** day of the year.
- The Louvre in Paris is one of **the most famous** museums in the world.
- She is really nice – one of **the nicest** people I know.
- What's **the best** movie you've ever seen, and what's **the worst**?
- How old is **your youngest** child?

Compare the superlative and the comparative:

- This hotel is **the cheapest** in town. (*superlative*)
It's **cheaper** than all the others in town. (*comparative*)
- He's **the most patient** person I've ever met.
He's much **more patient** than I am.

C **oldest** and **eldest**

The superlative of **old** is **oldest**:

- That church is **the oldest** building in the town. (*not the eldest*)

We use **eldest** only when we talk about people in a family (you can also use **oldest**):

- Their eldest son** is 13 years old. (*or Their oldest son*)
- Are you **the eldest** in your family? (*or the oldest*)

D After superlatives we normally use **in** with places:

- What's the longest river **in the world**? (*not of the world*)
- We had a nice room. It was one of the best **in the hotel**. (*not of the hotel*)

We also use **in** for organisations and groups of people (a class / a company etc.):

- Who is the youngest student **in the class**? (*not of the class*)

For a period of time (**day, year** etc.), we normally use **of**:

- Yesterday was the hottest day **of the year**.
- What was the happiest day **of your life**?

E We often use the *present perfect* (*I have done*) after a superlative (see also Unit 8A):

- What's **the most important** decision **you've** ever **made**?
- That was **the best** holiday **I've had** for a long time.

Exercises

108.1 Complete the sentences. Use the superlative forms (-est or most ...) of the words in the box.**bad** **cheap** **good** **honest** **popular** **short** **tall**

1 We didn't have much money, so we stayed at the cheapest hotel in the town.

2 This building is 250 metres high, but it's not in the city.

3 It was an awful day. It was day of my life.

4 What is sport in your country?

5 I like the morning. For me it's part of the day.

6 Sarah always tells the truth. She's one of people I know.

7 A straight line is distance between two points.

108.2 Complete the sentences. Use a superlative (-est or most ...) or a comparative (-er or more ...).

1 We stayed at the cheapest hotel in the town. (cheap)

2 Our hotel was cheaper than all the others in the town. (cheap)

3 I wasn't feeling well yesterday, but I feel a bit today. (good)

4 What's thing you've ever bought? (expensive)

5 I prefer this chair to the other one. It's (comfortable)

6 Amy and Ben have three daughters. is 14 years old. (old)

7 Who is the person you know? (old)

8 What's way to get to the station? (quick)

9 Which is – the bus or the train? (quick)

10 I can remember when I was three years old. It's memory. (early)

11 Everest is mountain in the world. It is than any other mountain. (high)

12 A: This knife isn't very sharp. Do you have a one?
B: No, it's one I have. (sharp)

108.3 Complete the sentences. Use a superlative (-est or most ...) + a preposition (of or in).

1 It's a very good room. It's the best room in the hotel.

2 Brazil is a very large country. It's South America.

3 It was a very happy day. It was my life.

4 This is a very valuable painting. It's the museum.

5 Spring is a very busy time for me. It's the year.

In the following sentences use one of + a superlative + a preposition.

6 It's a very good room. It's one of the best rooms in the hotel.

7 He's a very rich man. He's one of the richest men in the country.

8 She's a very good student. She's one of the best students in the class.

9 It was a very bad experience. It was my life.

10 It's a very famous university. It's the world.

108.4 What do you say in these situations? Use a superlative + ever.

1 You've just been to the cinema. The movie was extremely boring. You tell your friend:
(boring / movie / ever / see) That's the most boring movie I've ever seen .

2 Someone has just told you a joke which you think is very funny. You say:
(funny / joke / ever / hear) That's

3 You're drinking coffee with a friend. It's really good coffee. You say:
(good / coffee / ever / taste) This

4 You have just run ten kilometres. You've never run further than this. You say:
(far / ever / run) That

5 You gave up your job. Now you think this was a very bad mistake. You say:
(bad / mistake / ever / make) It

6 Your friend meets a lot of people, some of them famous. You ask your friend:
(famous / person / ever / meet?) Who