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### MAKING COMPARISONS

The form of comparatives and superlatives depends on the number of syllables in the original adjective or adverb.

#### One-syllable adjectives

| adjective | comparative | superlative |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| high      | higher      | highest     |
| small     | smaller     | smallest    |

#### Adjectives ending in a single consonant

| adjective | comparative | superlative |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| fat       | fatter      | fattest     |
| sad       | sadder      | saddest     |

#### Adjectives with two syllables

| adjective | comparative               | superlative                |
|-----------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| clever    | cleverer /<br>more clever | cleverest /<br>most clever |
| narrow    | narrower /<br>more narrow | narrowest /<br>most narrow |

### Adjectives with three or more syllables

| adjective    | comparative       | superlative       |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| experienced  | more experienced  | most experienced  |
| inconvenient | more inconvenient | most inconvenient |

#### Note:

Adjectives with two syllables, ending in *-y*, replace the *y* with *i*:

*easy*      *easier*      *easiest*  
*happy*    *happier*    *happiest*

These very common adjectives have irregular comparative and superlative forms.

| adjective | comparative       | superlative         |
|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|
| good      | better            | best                |
| bad       | worse             | worst               |
| little    | less              | least               |
| much      | more              | most                |
| far       | further / farther | furthest / farthest |

#### Use:

- Comparative adjectives compare differences between two nouns. Sentences have the following structure:  
noun (subject) + verb + comparative adjective + *than* + noun (object)  
*My SUV is more reliable than your jeep.*
- Superlative adjectives compare one noun to a group of nouns.  
noun (subject) + verb + *the* + superlative adjective + noun (object)  
*His flat is the most luxurious home on the estate.*
- To say two things are the same, use:  
**as + adjective + as**  
*She finds doing physics as challenging as solving maths equations.*  
(= She finds doing physics and solving equations in maths equally challenging.)

- To say that one thing is less than another, use:  
**not so/as + adjective + as**  
*The party's majority in Parliament is not so/as substantial as before.*
- To say that one thing is more or less than another, use:  
**less/least + adjective**  
*This coat is less expensive than the other one.*  
*This is the least expensive coat in the shop.*
- These adverbs form irregular comparisons:  
*well – better – best      badly – worse – worst*
- To say that we do one thing the same as another, use:  
**as + adverb + as**  
*She dresses as elegantly as a fashion model.*
- To say that we do one thing differently from another, use:  
**not so/as + adverb + as**  
*He doesn't adapt to new situations as rapidly as his peers.*

- We can use words and phrases with comparative forms to express large and small differences. These are some ways of expressing a large difference:

***much / far / a lot / considerably + adjective/adverb + -er / more + adjective/adverb***

*Acts of kindness in that century were much rarer than nowadays.*

***not nearly as + adjective/adverb + as***

*The study of genetics is not nearly as well developed as we would wish.*

***by far + superlative***

*Surprisingly, the common pizza is by far the most authentic dish in Italy.*

***one of the most + superlative + infinitive***

*Amazingly, one of the filthiest parts of the human body is the mouth, which has 600 different types of bacteria living in it.*

- These are some ways of expressing a small difference:

***slightly / a bit / a little + adjective/adverb + -er / more + adjective/adverb***

*Because of the new gambling law people spend slightly less time in casinos than they did in the past.*

***not quite as + adjective/adverb + as***

*The launch of the new product was not quite as successful as anticipated.*

## PRACTICE

- 1 Complete the sentences with the correct comparative or superlative form of the word in brackets.
- 1 Today is the ..... (bad) day I've had this year.
- 2 You call in sick ..... (often) than anyone else in the class.
- 3 This questionnaire about energy use is the ..... (complicated) I've ever completed.
- 4 The conference on tropical diseases was the ..... (memorable) I've ever attended.
- 5 The ferry from Staten Island to Manhattan is the ..... (cheap) in the world. It's free!
- 6 This shape is much ..... (irregular) than the other one.

**2** Tick the correct sentences. Correct the sentences with mistakes.

- 1 He's the more hard-working student in the class.
- 2 I think that this natural medicine is most effective than those tablets.
- 3 Generally the inhabitants of that part of town are not as affluent as we are.
- 4 This curry is hotter and more exotic than the one we had yesterday.
- 5 The climate in certain parts of Spain is considerably harsh than many people realise.

**3** Put the words in order to make sentences with the comparative or superlative.

- 1 His ambition / than / has always / his brother's. / greater / been /

2 was as accurate / the report / Her analysis / the financial situation / as / in the magazine. / of /

3 The lecturer is / since she started / less / work on her / available to her students / thesis.

4 His skills / are not / as fast / as people predicted. / developing /

5 My interest in / considerably / than / the project is / greater now / it was / at the beginning.

6 ideally want. / high / My motivation is / as / not quite / as I would /

7 than / There are slightly / living in / fewer people / ten years ago. / the town /

8 more / than by train. / It's / to travel by car / considerably / exhausting /

### ADJECTIVES WITH -ED AND -ING

People often confuse adjectives that end in *-ed*, like **bored** or **excited**, with adjectives that end in *-ing*, for example **boring** or **exciting**.

The difference is that:

- adjectives that end in *-ed* describe emotions – they tell us how people feel about something.  
*Did you see that video about spiders? Yes, I was **terrified** by it.*
- adjectives that end in *-ing* describe the thing that produces the feeling.

*I watched a **terrifying** video about spiders on YouTube.*

#### Spelling changes when adding *-ed* and *-ing*

##### *-ed*

If the base word ends in an 'e', just add 'd':

surprise → surprised    amuse → amused

##### *-ing*

If the base word ends in an 'e', remove the 'e' and add 'ing':

surprise → surprising    amuse → amusing

## PRACTICE

### 1 Choose the correct adjective.

- 1 I was *fascinated* / *fascinating* by the presentation.
- 2 He was *irritated* / *irritating* to meet Milly in town after they had had an argument.
- 3 She talks a lot about the time she worked in a circus. She's so *amused* / *amusing*.
- 4 You look *exhausted* / *exhausting*. Why don't you lie down for a bit?
- 5 Feeling *tired* / *tiring* and *depressed* / *depressing*, she phoned her best friend for a chat.
- 6 I really can't eat this! It smells *disgusting* / *disgusted*! What is it?

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the adjectives.

- 1 The plot of the story was really interesting and the characters were very ..... (appeal).
- 2 I could listen to her all night. She's one of the most ..... (fascinate) people I know.
- 3 Although some people are not directly ..... (involve) in education, they can still be very influential.
- 4 Put your notebook down and listen. I've got some ..... (astonish) news for you.
- 5 His parents were very ..... (dissatisfy) by his result in the test.
- 6 She's got the ..... (irritate) habit of speaking with her mouth full.
- 7 Children! Your behaviour is ..... (disgust)! Don't eat without washing your hands!
- 8 The new Professor of Politics is very ..... (prejudice). Very few students attend his lectures.