

Theme 1:



INTENSIFIERS: We use words like **very**, **really** and **extremely** to make **adjectives** stronger:

- It's a **very** interesting story.
- It's a **really** interesting story.
- Everyone was **extremely** excited.

Other intensifiers are: amazingly, exceptionally, incredibly, particularly, remarkably, unusually

We also use **enough** to say more about an adjective, but enough comes after its adjective:

- If you are eighteen, you are old **enough** to drive a car.
- I can't wear those shoes. They're not big **enough**.

INTENSIFIERS WITH STRONG ADJECTIVES. Strong adjectives are words like:

- very big ⇒ enormous, huge
- very small ⇒ tiny
- very clever ⇒ brilliant
- very bad ⇒ awful, terrible, disgusting, dreadful
- very sure ⇒ certain
- very good ⇒ excellent, perfect, ideal, wonderful, splendid
- very tasty ⇒ delicious

We do not normally use very with these adjectives. We do not say something is ~~very enormous~~ or someone is ~~very brilliant~~.

With **strong adjectives**, we normally use intensifiers like:

absolutely, completely, exceptionally, particularly, really, quite, pretty, totally, utterly

- The film was **absolutely** awful.
- He was an **exceptionally** brilliant child.
- The food smelled **really** disgusting.

INTENSIFIERS WITH PARTICULAR ADJECTIVES. Some intensifiers go with particular adjectives depending on the meaning of the adjective:

- I'm afraid your wife is **dangerously** ill.
- The car was **seriously** damaged.
- Fortunately none of the passengers was **seriously** hurt.

Some intensifiers go with particular adjectives. For example, we use the intensifier **highly** with the adjectives successful, intelligent, likely and unlikely:

- He was **highly** intelligent.
- She's a **highly** successful businesswoman.

We do NOT say: We had a ~~highly tasty~~ meal. Or That is a ~~highly good~~ idea.

We use the intensifier **bitterly** with the adjectives disappointed, unhappy and cold:

- I was **bitterly** unhappy at school.
- We were **bitterly** disappointed to lose the match.
- It can get **bitterly** cold in winter.



Exercise 1: Use the expressions to complete each sentence in the most appropriate way. There are 3 spare ones not to be used.

deeply disappointed / drop-dead gorgeous / seriously damaged / desperately unhappy
gravely ill / universally popular / deliriously happy / highly successful /
firmly committed / keenly observant

1. My mother was a _____ tennis player in her time. She won loads of tournaments.
2. The car was _____ in the accident. It had to be scrapped.
3. Tom was _____ when he heard he'd become a grandfather. He couldn't stop smiling.
4. I was _____ by my team's performance last night. It was terrible.
5. The restaurant was shut down when three people were _____ after eating there.
6. Esther's _____ working at the bank, so she's looking for a new job.
7. In order to be a successful detective, you need to be _____.



INTENSIFIERS WITH COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES.

We use these words and phrases as intensifiers with comparative adjectives:

much, far, a lot, quite a lot, a great deal, a good deal, a good bit, a fair bit

- He is **much** older than me.
- New York is **a lot** bigger than Boston.

We use **much** and **far** as intensifiers with comparative adjectives in front of a noun:

- France is a **much** bigger country than Britain.
- He is a **far** better player than Ronaldo.

We use **easily** and **by far** as intensifiers with superlative adjectives:

- The blue whale is **easily** the biggest animal in the world.
- This car was **by far** the most expensive.

ADJECTIVES AS INTENSIFIERS

We use some adjectives as intensifiers with nouns:

Absolute, complete, total, perfect, real, utter

- He's a **complete** idiot.
- They were talking **utter** nonsense.

We do NOT say: ~~The idiot was complete.~~ Or ~~The nonsense they were talking was utter.~~

Source: <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar/intensifiers>

Exercise 2: Choose the correct noun to complete the following sentences.

friend fanatic idiot fabrication stranger nightmare

1. Paul and I have been very close since our schooldays. He's a real _____.
2. I tell you, I've never seen that man before in my life. He's a perfect _____.
3. There's no truth in those newspaper reports whatsoever. They're a total _____.
4. Rosa's got a huge record collection. When it comes to music, she's an absolute _____.
5. I can't believe Harry deleted all those emails. He's a complete _____.
6. Last week was the worst week of my life. It was an utter _____.