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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 / more clever	cleverest / most clever
narrow	narrower / more narrow	narrowest / 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.