

# English IV

## Order of Adjectives

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Lesson 2

# What is an Adjective?

- Adjectives are words that modify (describe) the qualities or states of being of nouns and pronouns:

*enormous, silly, yellow, interesting, fast. etc.*

- They can also describe the quantity of nouns:

*many, few, millions, eleven, etc.*

# The Order of Adjectives

Before we address the proper order of adjectives, we need to recognize the difference between two types of adjectives:

- Cumulative
- Coordinate

# The Order of Adjectives

- **Cumulative adjectives** work together to modify a noun. They cumulate (or combine together) as they get nearer to the noun to create a more specific meaning.
- Cumulative adjectives ***must*** appear in a specific order.
- They ***cannot*** be separated by commas or conjunctions (such as “and” or “but”).

# The Order of Adjectives

It is ***not*** fixed, there are variations of the order.

Placement	Type of Adjective	Examples
1	Determiner or Article	• a, an, the
2	Quantity	• one, three, etc.
3	Opinion	• beautiful, smart, etc.
4	Size	• big, small, etc.

# The Order of Adjectives

Placement	Type of Adjective	Examples
5	Physical Quality	• thin, lumpy, etc.
6	Shape	• square, round, etc.
7	Age	• young, old, etc.
8	Color	• red, purple, etc.

# The Order of Adjectives

Placement	Type of Adjective	Examples
9	Origin or Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>French, Catholic, etc.</li></ul>
10	Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>metal, leather, etc.</li></ul>
11	Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>two-sided, all-purpose, etc.</li></ul>
12	Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>cutting</i> knife, <i>driving</i> gloves, etc.</li></ul>

# The Order of Adjectives

- When you use multiple adjectives from different categories as we indicated, they function as **cumulative adjectives**. You do not need to put commas between cumulative adjectives.
  - *A large antique Chinese porcelain vase*
  - *The angry furry dog*



# The Order of Adjectives

- If you used several adjectives from the same category, they are **coordinate adjectives**. Then you need to use commas between coordinate adjectives, but the order that you use them does not matter.
  - *A dull, meaningless afternoon*
  - *The mean and angry dog*

# The Order of Adjectives

- **Caution:** Too many adjectives can be confusing to readers and listeners.
- Try to focus on only two, three or four meaningful adjectives that will add relevant description to your sentence. Then place them in the proper order.