

Comparative and superlative adjectives

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Comparative adjectives

- Comparative adjectives compare one person or thing with another and enable us to say whether a person or thing has more or less of a particular quality:
- Josh is taller than his sister.
- I'm more interested in music than sport.

Superlative adjectives

- Superlative adjectives describe one person or thing as having more of a quality than all other people or things in a group:
- The ‘Silver Arrow’ will be the fastest train in the world when it is built.
- What is the least expensive way of travelling in Japan?

**COMPARATIVE
AND
SUPERLATIVE
ADJECTIVES**

FORM

One-syllable adjectives (big, cold, hot, long, nice, old, tall)

- To form the comparative, we use the -er suffix with adjectives of one syllable:
 - It's colder today than yesterday.
 - Sasha is older than Mark.
- To form the superlative, we use the -est suffix with adjectives of one syllable. We normally use the before a superlative adjective:
 - At one time, the Empire State building in New York was the tallest building in the world.
 - They have three boys. Richard is the oldest and Simon is the youngest.

type of adjective

comparative

superlative

most adjectives

add *-er*: *cheaper, richer, smaller, younger*

add *-est*: *cheapest, richest, smallest, youngest*

adjectives ending in *-e*

add *-r*: *finer, nicer, rarer*

add *-st*: *finest, nicest, rarest*

adjectives with one vowel
+ one consonant:

double the final consonant
and add *-er*: *bigger, hotter, thinner*

double the final consonant
and add *-est*: *biggest, hottest, thinnest*

One-syllable adjectives which are irregular

- Some one-syllable adjectives have irregular comparative and superlative forms:
 - bad, worse, worst,
 - far, farther/further, farthest/furthest
 - good, better, best
 - old, older/elder, oldest/eldest
- The morning flight is better than the afternoon one.
- Olivia is Denise's best friend.
- I think that was the worst film I've ever seen!

Two-syllable adjectives

- Two-syllable adjectives ending in -y change y to i and take the -er and -est endings:
 - busy, busier, busiest
 - happy, happier, happiest
 - easy, easier, easiest
 - funny, funnier, funniest
- We were busier last week than this week.
- Are you happier now that you've changed your job?
- That was the easiest exam I've ever taken.

Longer adjectives

- Adjectives of three or more syllables form the comparative with more/less and the superlative with most/least:
- The second lecture was more interesting than the first.
- London is the most popular tourist destination in England.
- If you are going as a group, the least expensive option is to rent an apartment or villa.