

Comparative and superlative adjectives: usage and form

Usage

Comparative adjectives compare two people, places, or things. Use than when the second item is mentioned.

Mexico City is **larger than** Los Angeles.

Housing in New York is **more expensive than** in Lima.

Compared with Los Angeles, Mexico City is **larger**. Compared with Lima, housing is **more expensive** in New York.

Superlative adjectives compare more than two people, places, or things.

Compared to other cities in the Americas, Mexico City is **the largest**.

Be careful! Use the with superlative adjectives.

Don't say: Mexico City is **largest**.

Form

adjective	comparative adjective	superlative adjective
cheap	cheaper (than)	the cheapest
expensive	more expensive (than)	the most expensive
practical	less practical (than)	the least practical

Superlative adjectives: spelling rules

Add **-est** to one-syllable adjectives. If the adjective ends in **-e**, add **-st**.

cheap → the **cheapest**

loose → the **loosest**

If an adjective ends in (or is) a consonant-vowel-consonant sequence, double the final consonant before adding **-est**.

hot → the **hottest**

For most adjectives that end in **-y**, change the **y** to **i** and add **-est**.

pretty → the **prettiest**

busy → the **busiest**

To form the superlative of most adjectives of two or more syllables, use **the most** or **the least**.

Car trips are **the least expensive** vacations.

Cruises are **the most relaxing** vacations.

A Write *both* the comparative and superlative form of each adjective.

	comparative	superlative		comparative	superlative
1 tall	10 interesting	.....	.....
2 easy	11 conservative	.....	.....
3 liberal	12 light	.....	.....
4 heavy	13 casual	.....	.....
5 unusual	14 comfortable	.....	.....
6 pretty	15 relaxing	.....	.....
7 exciting	16 long	.....	.....
8 wild	17 short	.....	.....
9 informal	18 scary	.....	.....

B Complete each sentence with a comparative or superlative adjective. Use than if necessary.

- That dinner was (**delicious**) meal we had on our vacation.
- The Caribbean cruise is (**relaxing**) of our vacation packages.
- The Honsu X24 is a good camera, but the Cashio is (**easy**) to use.
- We have several models, but I'd say the R300 is (**popular**).
- I like that rug, but I think this one is (**beautiful**).
- Our vacation in Brazil was (**nice**) our vacation in Italy last year.
- All three stoves look good. But which one is (**easy**) to use?
- I like both the J12, the Summit, and the Pro tablets, but which one's (**small**)?
- Which of these three plates do you think is (**pretty**)?
- I can't decide if I should read this book or that one. Which one is (**interesting**)?

Intensifiers very, really, and too

Intensifiers make the meaning of adjectives stronger.

Very and really have the same meaning. They can intensify adjectives with a positive or negative meaning.

That restaurant is really (or very) good. I want to go there.

That movie is really (or very) scary. I don't want to see it.

Too also makes the meaning of adjectives stronger. But too expresses the idea of "more than enough." Too usually has a negative meaning.

That movie is too long. I don't want to see it.

This restaurant is too expensive. I'm not going to eat here.

Be careful! Don't use too to intensify adjectives with a positive meaning. Use very and really.

This camera is very affordable! NOT This camera is too affordable!

A Complete each sentence with too, really, or very and your own adjective.

- 1 Beach vacations are I love them.
- 2 French fries are You shouldn't eat them every day.
- 3 A cruise is I don't have enough money to take one.
- 4 They say this movie is I want to see it.
- 5 This book is You should read it.
- 6 English is People are learning it all over the world.
- 7 This printer is I need to replace it.
- 8 These pants are I need to buy a larger pair.

B Complete each conversation, using too or enough.

- 1 A: How about this? Should we buy it for your mother?
B: No. It isn't (pretty). I want something nicer.
- 2 A: Do you think this rug is too small?
B: No, it's great. I think it's (big).
- 3 A: Did you buy a microwave yesterday?
B: I looked at some. But they were (expensive).
- 4 A: Why are you sending that steak back to the chef?
B: It's an expensive meal, and this steak just isn't (good).
- 5 A: You never eat dessert?
B: No. Desserts are (sweet) for me.
- 6 A: How was your vacation?
B: To tell the truth, it just wasn't (relaxing).
- 7 A: How's that soup? Is it (hot)?
B: No, it's fine. Thanks.
- 8 A: Would you like more ice in your water?
B: Yes, please. It isn't (cold).