

#### Less trash is a good thing

# The comparison of adjectives in English:

To form **the comparative of an adjective**, English adds *-er* to shorter words ("prettier") or places *more* in front of more complicated ones ("more beautiful").

To form **the superlative of an adjective**, English adds *-est* ("prettiest") or uses *most* ("most beautiful").

To form **the comparative of an adverb,** English adds -*er* to those that do not end in -*ly* ("faster") and places *more* in front of those that do end in -*ly* ("more quickly").

To form **the superlative of an adverb**, English adds *-est* to those that do not end in *-ly* ("fastest") and places *most* in front of those that do ("most quickly").



## The comparison of adjectives and adverbs in German:

No matter how long the adjective or adverb, German always adds **-er** ("schöner", "interessanter"). <u>Never</u> use *mehr* for this purpose. Adjective endings follow the **-er**. Of course, adverbs and predicate adjectives take no endings.

Wir haben den süßeren Wein bestellt. We ordered the sweeter wine.

Die schlankere Frau ist nicht unbedingt die attraktivere. The slimmer woman isn't necessarily the more attractive one.

Er fährt schneller, wenn es nicht regnet. He drives faster when it isn't raining.

Sie steht ziemlich links, aber ihr Mann ist konservativer. She's pretty left-wing, but her husband's more conservative.



To form the superlative, German always adds **-st** or **-est**. Other than the few exceptions mentioned below, superlative adjectives always require a further ending:

Spieglein, Spieglein an der Wand, wer ist die Schönste im ganzen Land? *Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest one of all?* 

Wir haben den trockensten Wein bestellt. We ordered the driest wine.

Die schlankste Frau ist nicht unbedingt die attraktivste.

The slimmest woman isn't necessarily the most attractive one.

The superlative forms of adverbs or predicate adjectives take the form of "am -sten:"

Er singt am lautesten. He sings the loudest. Ich bin am glücklichsten, wenn ich allein bin. I'm happiest when I'm alone.

Some superlative forms of adverbs can end in "-stens" (without "am"):

Wir essen meistens in der Küche. We mostly eat in the kitchen.
Ich bin bestens versorgt. I'm very well provided for.
Hunde sind hier strengstens verboten. Dogs are strictly forbidden here.

Ihr Wagen wird frühestens Mittwoch fertig sein. Your car will be ready on Wednesday at the earliest.

#### The basic forms:

<u>Positive</u>	<u>Comparative</u>	<u>Superlative</u>	<u>or</u>
klein	kleiner	am kleinsten	der/die/das kleinste
intelligent	intelligenter	am intelligentesten	der/die/das intelligenteste

Some adjectives, almost always monosyllabic, add an umlaut. Here are some of the more common ones:

alt	älter	am ältesten	old
arm	ärmer	am ärmsten	poor
dumm	dümmer	am dümmsten	stupid
gesund	gesünder	am gesündesten	healthy
grob	gröber	am gröbsten	coarse
groß	größer	am größten	large



hart	härter	am härtesten	hard
jung	jünger	am jüngsten	young
kalt	kälter	am kältesten	cold
klug	klüger	am klügsten	smart
kurz	kürzer	am kürzesten	short
lang	länger	am längsten	long
oft	öfter	am öftesten	often
scharf	schärfer	am schärfsten	sharp; spicy
schwach	schwächer	am schwächsten	weak
schwarz	schwärzer	am schwärzesten	black
stark	stärker	am stärksten	strong
warm	wärmer	am wärmsten	warm

Several other adjectives may or may not take an umlaut (It's up to the speaker, but in most cases the umlaut is unusual):

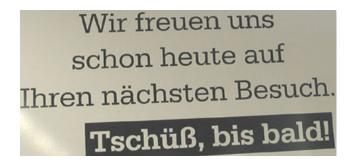
blaß	pale	fromm	pious	glatt	slick	krank	sick
naß	wet	rot	red	schmal	narrow		



Dining Hall Orientation. Our gastronomic traffic light: [red] Preferably infrequently! Best combined with green. [yellow] A good choice! Take repeatedly! [green] The best choice! The more often, the better!

Some adjectives or adverbs change their stems in other ways, as well:

bald	eher	am ehesten	soon
gern	lieber	am liebsten	"gladly"
gut	besser	am besten	good
hoch	höher	am höchsten	high
nah	näher	am nächsten	near
viel	mehr	am meisten	much





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Adjectives ending in **-el** or **-er** normally drop the **-e-** before the comparartive **-er**:

dunkler *darker* teurer *more expensive* 

Adjectives ending in **-d**, **-t**, **-s**, **-ß**, **-sch**, or **-z** usually add **-est**:

am breitesten the widest am kürzesten the shortest am weißesten the whitest

Exceptions: "am größten" (*the biggest*) and adjectives formed from present participles: "am entgenkommendsten" (*the most accommodating*).



Unsliced cheese simply tastes better.

Our tip! for it has a fresher and fuller taste, can be used in more ways, and doesn't dry out as fast

Using "als" and "wie" in making comparisons:

Ich bin so gut wie du.

I'm as good as you.

Es ist nicht so warm wie gestern. It's not as warm as yesterday.

Das ist genauso dumm wie dein letzter Vorschlag. That's just as stupid as your last suggestion.

Du bist ebenso laut wie ich.

You're just as loud as I am.
Sie ist älter als ihr Bruder.

She is older than her brother.

Ein Pferd kann schneller laufen als ein Mensch. A horse can run faster than a human.

Note: Many Germans use "wie" instead of "als" ("Ich bin besser wie du"), but this construction is considered to be bad grammar. Even speakers who do it themselves will correct a foreigner who makes this mistake.

Intensifiers: to indicate a progressive development, English repeats the comparative ("Things are getting better and better"). German can do that ("Es wird kälter und kälter") or, more usually, use "immer": "Es wird immer besser."



The world is moving faster and faster

Similar to English's "The more the merrier," German employs "Je mehr, desto besser."



The faster you're on the information highway, the better wired you are to your customers

### To prefer / like best:

Ich gehe gern ins Theater I like to go to the theater. Ich habe Weißwein gern. I like white wine. I prefer to go to the movies. Ich habe Rotwein lieber. Ich gehe lieber ins Kino. I prefer red wine. Ich gehe am liebsten ins Konzert. I most like to go to concerts. Ich habe Sekt am liebsten. I like champagne best.

mehr or eher can be used to compare two qualities of the same person or thing:

Der Film ist mehr interessant als unterhaltend. The film is more interesting than entertaining.

Deine Witze sind eher traurig als witzig. Your jokes are more sad than funny.

Das ist eher möglich. That's more likely.

Eher geht ein Kamel durch ein Nadelöhr, als dass ein It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for

Reicher in den Himmel kommt. a rich man to go to heaven.

eher can also mean "rather; preferably":

Ich gehe eher ins Theater. I prefer to go to the theater.

I'd rather starve. Eher hungere ich.

To express the notion of "favorite," use the prefix **Lieblings-**:

Meine Lieblingsfarbe ist blau. My favorite color is blue.

Wenn mein Vater spazieren geht, ist sein Lieblingsziel die When my father goes for a walk, the pub on the corner is his Kneipe an der Ecke.

favorite destination.

**aller-** intensifies a superlative:

Das habe ich am allerliebsten. I like that best of all.

#### Er arbeitet am allerschwersten. He works the hardest of all.

The comparative and superlative forms of adjectives have all the possibilities of the positive forms. They can modify nouns or form the basis of <u>adjectival nouns</u>. Logically, however, a superlative cannot of course follow an indefinite article ("ein höchster Berg" [a highest mountain]). Some examples:

"Ich bin der Größte!" "I am the greatest!"

Der teuerste Wagen gehört meinem älteren Bruder. The most expensive car belongs to my older brother.

Sie hat einen noch besseren Freund gefunden.

She found an even better boyfriend.

You'll never find a better opportunity.

Von ihren Kindern ist das Jüngste am intelligentesten. Of her children, the youngest is the most intelligent.



Driving School... Also for "older people," beginners, and "scaredy-cats"

Training for licenses B, BE (passenger cars), also automatic shift

Similarly, the comparative and superlative forms of adverbs act like the positive forms. Some examples:

Ich würde das lieber früher als später hören. I'd rather hear that earlier than later.
Wir arbeiten hier seit längerer Zeit. We've been working here for some time.
Wie komme ich am besten in die Stadt? What's the best way into town?
Ein älterer Herr hat mir geholfen. An older gentleman helped me.



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