

bet·ter¹

S1 W1

/ˈbetə \$ -ər/

adjective

1 [comparative of good] **BETTER** more useful, interesting, satisfactory, effective, suitable etc

OPP

Your stereo is better than mine.

*There must be a better way to do this.
a better-quality car*

much/a lot/far better

We now have a much better understanding of the disease.

better still/even better

It was even better than last year.

⚠ Better is a comparative form. Do not say 'more better'.

2 [comparative of well]

a) **BETTER**

more healthy or less ill or painful than before

OPP

She is a little better today, the doctor says.

*I'm **feeling** much **better**, thank you.*

b) **HEALTHY**

completely well again after an illness:

When you're better we can see about planning a trip.

*I hope he **gets better** (= recovers from an illness) soon.*

3 it is better/it would be better

used to give your opinion or make a suggestion about what you think should be done or happen:

it is better to do something

It's much better to get a proper written agreement.

better if

It might be better if you stayed here.

4 get better IMPROVE

to improve:

Her English isn't really getting any better.

Things can only get better.

5 no better

a)

not better than something else or something before:

The following day the weather was no better.

b)

used to say that something is the best:

there is no better way/example/place etc

There's no better way of exploring the region.

6 nothing better

a)

used to say that you really like something or think that something is very good:

like/love/enjoy nothing better (than)

She likes nothing better than a nice long walk along the beach.

There's nothing better than beating someone who's playing well.

b)

used to say that a thing or situation is not very good, but is the only thing possible or available:

have nothing better to do

Have you got nothing better to do than sit there playing that silly game?

I only picked it up because there was nothing better to read.

7 **that's better** (spoken)

used to say that something has improved, that you are happier or more comfortable, or to encourage someone:

Ah, that's better. I needed to sit down.

'Can you turn it down?' 'Is that better?'

8 ^{LATE}**better late than never** (spoken)

used to say that even if something happens late or someone arrives late, this is better than it not happening or their not arriving at all

- **your better half/other half** AT HALF² (8) ,
- **the best/better part of something** AT PART¹ (9) ,
- **against your better judgment** AT JUDGMENT (1) ,
- **somebody's better nature** AT NATURE (2) ,
- **better luck next time** AT LUCK¹ (14) ,
- **better the devil you know** AT DEVIL (11) ,
- **have seen better days** AT SEE¹ (30)

THESAURUS

better the COMPARATIVE of good: *She wants a better job. | The sales figures were far better than expected. | Lucy's better at French than I am.*

superior better, especially in quality: *German cars are far superior. | a superior product | He thinks men are superior to women.*

preferable (formal) more suitable or useful – used when saying which one you prefer: *Cash would be preferable. | Anything would be preferable to the system we have now.*

be an improvement on something to be better than something that existed before: *The engine is a huge improvement on previous diesel engines.*

have the edge to be slightly better than another person or thing – used especially when saying which one will win in a game or competition: *Federer is likely to have the edge in Sunday's game.* | *For me, this film has the edge over the others.*

be miles ahead (of somebody/ something)
(also **be streets ahead (of somebody/ something)** *BrE*)
(*informal*) to be very much better than someone or something that you are competing against: *The company is streets ahead of its rivals.*

there's no comparison (*spoken*) used to emphasize that one person or thing is clearly much better than someone or something else: *There's no comparison between the two teams.* | *'Which apartment do you prefer?' 'Well, there's no comparison. The first one we saw is bigger, quieter, and has much nicer furniture.'*

Word origin

Language: Old English

Origin: *betera*