

## Position of adjectives

- A** Many adjectives can be used either before the noun they describe, or following linking verbs such as *appear*, *be*, *become*, *feel*, *get*, and *seem* (see Unit 21). Compare:
- ☐ The **high price** surprised him.    *and*    ☐ The price **seemed high**.
- B** Some adjectives are seldom or never used before the noun they describe. These include –
- ☆ some adjectives formed by adding a prefix 'a-', often to a noun or verb: **afraid**, **alike**, **alive**, **alone**, **ashamed**, **asleep**, **awake**, **aware**:
    - ☐ The horse *was* **alone** in the field. (*but not* The **alone** horse...)
 Some of these adjectives with an 'a-' prefix have related adjectives that can be used either before a noun or after a linking verb. Compare:
    - ☐ The animal *was* **alive**.    *and*    A **living** animal. (*or* A **live** animal./ The animal *was* **living**.)
 Other pairs like this include **afraid** – **frightened**, **alike** – **similar**, **alone** – **lone**, **asleep** – **sleeping**.
  - ☆ some adjectives used to describe health and feelings: **content**, **fine**, **glad**, **ill** (but note 'ill health'), **sorry**, **(un)sure**, **upset** (but 'an upset stomach'), **(un)well** (but 'He's not a well man'):
    - ☐ My son *felt* **unwell**. (*but not* My **unwell** son...)
 These adjectives are sometimes used between an adverb and noun e.g. 'a **terminally ill** patient'.
- C** *Emphasising adjectives* are used to emphasise your feelings about something. Compare:
- ☐ I felt a fool.    *and*    ☐ I felt a **complete** fool. (for emphasis)
- Some emphasising adjectives (such as **complete**, and also **absolute**, **entire**, **mere**, **sheer**, **total**, **utter**) are seldom or never used after a linking verb:
- ☐ It was a **total** failure. (*but not usually* 'The failure *was* **total**'.)
- Classifying adjectives* are used to say that something is of a particular type. For example, we can talk about '**democratic** decisions', where '**democratic**' distinguishes them from other types of decision. Other classifying adjectives include **atomic**, **chemical**, **cubic**, **digital**, **environmental**, **medical**, **phonetic**; **annual**, **general**, **occasional**, **northern** (etc.), **maximum**, **minimum**, **underlying**. Classifying adjectives are seldom or never used after a linking verb:
- ☐ a **nuclear** explosion (*but not usually* 'The explosion *was* **nuclear**', unless we particularly want to emphasise a contrast with other kinds of explosion)
- Qualitative adjectives* are used to give the quality that a thing or person has. We use them either directly before a noun or after a linking verb. Compare:
- ☐ a **beautiful** sunset                      *and*                      ☐ The sunset *was* **beautiful**.
- Note that some classifying adjectives can also be used with different meanings as qualitative adjectives and placed after a linking verb. Compare:
- ☐ The country's **economic reforms**.    *and*    ☐ The *process* *isn't* **economic**. (= not profitable)
- Other adjectives like this include **academic**, **conscious**, **educational**, **(il)legal**, **scientific**.
- D** Many adjectives can be used immediately after a noun, at the beginning of a reduced relative clause (see Unit 69B). For example –
- ☆ adjectives before a *to*-infinitive, or a prepositional phrase as part of the adjective phrase:
    - ☐ It was a *speech* **calculated** *to appeal* to the unions.
    - ☐ He is a *manager* **capable** *of taking* difficult decisions.
  - ☆ some -ible and -able adjectives such as **available**, **imaginable**, **possible**, **suitable**. However, we use these adjectives immediately after a noun *only* when the noun follows **the** or when the noun is made definite by what follows in a relative clause:
    - ☐ This was *the* most difficult *decision* **imaginable**.
    - ☐ It is a *treatment* **suitable** *for all children with asthma*.
  - ☆ the adjectives **concerned**, **involved**, **opposite**, **present**, **proper**, **responsible**. These words have different meanings when they are used *before* a noun and immediately after it. Compare:
    - ☐ All the *people* **present** (= who were there) approved of the decision. *and*
    - ☐ I was asked for my **present** *address*. (= my address now)

66.1 Suggest corrections to these sentences, or write ✓ if they are already correct. (B)

- 1 After the accident I tried to comfort the upset driver of the car.  
*After the accident I tried to comfort the driver of the car, who was upset.*
- 2 In the distance I could see an alone figure walking towards me.
- 3 It wasn't a great surprise when Ken died as he hadn't been a well man for years.
- 4 I remember her as a glad person who was always smiling.
- 5 He stood at the bedroom door, looking at his asleep daughter.
- 6 The fire on the ship is now under control, but there are still a lot of afraid passengers on board.
- 7 She spent most of her life nursing seriously ill children in the hospital.
- 8 The two children were of an alike age.
- 9 We were unsure which way to go.
- 10 The sorry girls apologised to their teacher for their behaviour.

66.2 Choose one pair of words to complete each pair of sentences. In some sentences, you can use either adjective in the pair, in which case write them both; in others you can use only one of them. (C)

domestic – unsafe    educational – entertaining    inevitable – utter  
legal – stupid    serious – underlying

- 1 a The experiment was a/an ..... failure.  
b After Dr Owen left the project, its failure was .....
- 2 a None of the equipment in the warehouse is .....  
b All ..... equipment should be switched off at the end of the day.
- 3 a The trip to the wildlife park was a/an ..... experience.  
b The toys were ..... and the children played with them for hours.
- 4 a The fault in the computer system is ..... enough to disrupt all the work in the office.  
b The ..... problem has not yet been solved.
- 5 a He was involved in a ..... argument with his neighbour over some trees in the garden.  
b It's completely ..... to charge a fee for entry into the museum.

66.3 Write the word given in brackets in one of the spaces in each sentence, either before or after the noun. If both positions are possible, indicate this. (D)

- 1 The party was excellent, and I'd like to thank all the ..... people .....  
(concerned)
- 2 As the ..... minister ..... for the health service, I think he should resign.  
(responsible)
- 3 The new machinery was intended to increase output, but it seems to have had the ..... effect ..... (opposite)
- 4 The pond on the village green was filled in with the ..... approval ..... of most local residents. (apparent)
- 5 Children are only admitted when accompanied by a/an ..... adult .....  
(responsible)
- 6 It's the only ..... room ..... in the hotel that night. (available)
- 7 I live on one side of the road and my mother lives in the ..... house .....  
(opposite)
- 8 Cars drive too fast past the school and ..... teachers ..... have complained to the police. (concerned)
- 9 There is ..... financial advice ..... if you need it. (available)

## Gradable and non-gradable adjectives (1)

A

If an adjective is *gradable* it can be used with adverbs such as *very* or *extremely* to say that a thing or person has more or less of a particular quality. Here are some examples of adjectives used as gradable in their most common meanings:

Grading  
adverbs

a bit, dreadfully, extremely,  
hugely, immensely, intensely,  
rather, reasonably, slightly, very

+

angry, big, busy, clever,  
common, deep, fast, friendly,  
happy, important, low, popular,  
quiet, rich, strong, weak, young

Gradable  
adjectives

☐ She was *extremely* rich.

☐ The people there are *reasonably* friendly.

*Non-gradable* adjectives are not used with adverbs such as *very* or *extremely* because we don't usually imagine degrees of the quality referred to. With non-gradable adjectives we can use adverbs which emphasise their extreme or absolute nature, such as *absolutely*, *completely*, etc. Many classifying adjectives (see Unit 66) are usually non-gradable. Adverbs such as *almost*, *exclusively*, etc., which indicate the extent of the quality, are commonly used with classifying adjectives. Here are some examples of adjectives used as non-gradable in their most common meanings:

Non-  
grading  
adverbs

absolutely, completely, entirely,  
perfectly, practically, simply,  
totally, utterly, virtually; almost,  
exclusively, fully, largely,  
mainly, nearly, primarily

+

awful, excellent, huge,  
impossible, superb, terrible,  
unique, unknown, whole;  
domestic, environmental  
(see Unit 66C)

Non-  
gradable  
adjectives

☐ She gave us a *completely*  
*impossible* problem to solve.

☐ It was *absolutely* superb.

Gradable adjectives are sometimes used with non-grading adverbs such as *absolutely* and *totally*, and non-gradable adjectives are sometimes used with grading adverbs such as *extremely*, *rather* and *very*, particularly when we want to give special emphasis or when we are being humorous (see also Unit 68):

- ☐ What you're asking isn't just difficult – it's *extremely* impossible! (*grading adverb* + *non-gradable adjective*)
- ☐ You've won a hundred pounds? Wow, you're *virtually* rich! (*non-grading adverb* + *gradable adjective*)

Note that not all the adverbs can go with all the adjectives given in each of the tables above. For example, we can say 'absolutely huge', but we wouldn't usually say 'completely huge' unless it was for particular emphasis or for humour.

B

The adverbs *fairly* (= to quite a large degree, but usually less than 'very'), *really* (= 'very (much)') and *pretty* (= similar to 'fairly'; used in informal contexts) are commonly used with both gradable and non-gradable adjectives:

- ☐ She's *fairly* popular at school.
- ☐ I'm *really* busy at the moment.
- ☐ It's a *pretty* important exam.
- ☐ It was a *fairly* awful film.
- ☐ The flooding was *really* terrible.
- ☐ The bill was *pretty* huge.

However, notice that we don't generally use *fairly* (or *very*) with gradable adjectives such as *essential*, *invaluable*, *perfect*, *superb*, *tremendous* and *wonderful* which indicate that something is very good or necessary:

- ☐ Some experience is *really/pretty* essential for the job. (*not* ...fairly essential...)
- ☐ The weather that day was *really/pretty* perfect. (*not* ...fairly perfect.)

67.1 Write *very* in the spaces before gradable adjectives. (There are 5 of these.) Before the non-gradable adjectives write the following adverbs. Try to use a different one each time. (A)

*absolutely almost completely exclusively largely mainly practically*

- 1 The bridge is now \_\_\_\_\_ complete.
- 2 He acted in a/an \_\_\_\_\_ professional way.
- 3 The material is \_\_\_\_\_ cotton.
- 4 The food was \_\_\_\_\_ excellent.
- 5 Her explanation was \_\_\_\_\_ clear.
- 6 Their actions were \_\_\_\_\_ illegal.
- 7 The new restaurant is \_\_\_\_\_ popular.
- 8 I was in a/an \_\_\_\_\_ permanent state of suspense.
- 9 I thought she was \_\_\_\_\_ attractive.
- 10 Until last year the club was \_\_\_\_\_ male.
- 11 Small black cars are not \_\_\_\_\_ visible.
- 12 The railway is \_\_\_\_\_ underground.

67.2 Use an adverb + adjective in your response, as in 1. (A) How would you feel if...

- 1 a friend said s/he had just won a million pounds? *I'd be absolutely delighted.*
- 2 your best friend told you s/he was emigrating to Australia?
- 3 someone broke a window in your house or flat?
- 4 a complete stranger told you that you were very beautiful/handsome?
- 5 you lost some airline tickets you had just bought?

67.3 Make corrections to the italicised parts of this text where necessary. (A)

Dear Alan

I'm writing this letter from my new flat in Stratford. It's in an (1) *absolutely old* building which was (2) *totally renovated* last year. Fortunately, I didn't have to do much decorating when I moved in. As you know, I'm (3) *hugely useless* at DIY so I was (4) *absolutely happy* about that. The building is (5) *reasonably unique* in this part of Stratford, as most others around are (6) *rather modern*, and the view across the river from my sitting room is (7) *simply superb*. The flat's (8) *simply small*, but (9) *completely comfortable* for me.

My neighbours are (10) *very friendly* and usually (11) *fully quiet*. The only problem is that the woman upstairs plays the trumpet and I find it (12) *a bit impossible* to read when she's playing. I get (13) *slightly angry* about this, but she doesn't play for long each time, so it's not an (14) *extremely terrible* problem.

I know that the weather has been (15) *dreadfully awful* recently, so it's been difficult to for you to get here, but you must come over one evening. There's an (16) *absolutely marvellous* restaurant nearby that we could go to.

Hope all is well,  
Eva

67.4 Cross out any incorrect or unlikely alternatives. (B)

- 1 Her advice was *fairly/ really* invaluable.
- 2 Our neighbours are *really/ fairly* friendly.
- 3 I thought his performance as Hamlet was *fairly/ really* tremendous.
- 4 The children kept *pretty/ very* quiet during the concert.
- 5 The view from the window was *very/ pretty* wonderful.
- 6 Their co-operation is *pretty/ very* essential if we want the project to go ahead.
- 7 The weather was *really/ fairly* perfect for a long walk.
- 8 In this photograph she looked *really/ very* young.
- 9 The workmanship in the furniture was *pretty/ very* superb.
- 10 The disease is *fairly/ pretty* common in this part of the country.

## Gradable and non-gradable adjectives (2)

**A** Some adjectives have both gradable and non-gradable senses.

(i) Some adjectives have different senses when they are gradable and non-gradable. Compare:

- ☐ Smith is a *very common* name. (= frequently found; gradable) *and*
- ☐ We have a lot of *common* interests. (= shared; non-gradable; not *very*)
- ☐ The house is *very old*. (= existed many years; gradable) *and*
- ☐ I met my *old* politics professor the other day. (= former; non-gradable; not *very*)
- ☐ Sue's shoes are *very clean*. (= not dirty; gradable) *and*
- ☐ He left the town because he wanted to make a *clean* break with the past. (= starting again in different circumstances; non-gradable; not *very*)

Other adjectives like this include *civil, clean, critical, electric* (= 'exciting' when gradable), *empty, false, late, odd, original, particular, straight*.

(ii) Some adjectives have similar meanings when they are gradable and non-gradable. However, when they are gradable we talk about the quality that a person or thing has (i.e. they are *qualitative* adjectives and therefore can be used with an adverb), and when they are non-gradable we talk about the category or type they belong to (i.e. they are *classifying* adjectives). Compare:

- ☐ I don't know where he came from, but he sounded *slightly foreign*. (= not from this country; gradable) *and*
- ☐ She is now advising on the government's *foreign* policy. (= concerning other countries; non-gradable)
- ☐ They had a *very public* argument. (= seen/heard by a lot of people; gradable) *and*
- ☐ He was forced to resign by *public* pressure. (= from many people in the community; non-gradable)
- ☐ She had a *rather wild* look in her eyes. (= uncontrolled or frightened; gradable) *and*
- ☐ Even if it is raised by humans, a lion will always be a *wild* animal. (= not tame; non-gradable)

Other adjectives like this include *academic, adult, average, diplomatic, genuine, guilty, human, individual, innocent, mobile, private, professional, scientific, technical, true*.

(iii) When nationality adjectives are non-gradable we mean that a person or thing comes from a particular country; when they are gradable we mean that they have supposed characteristics of that country. Compare:

- ☐ There's a shop around the corner that sells *Italian* bread. *and*
- ☐ Giovanni has lived in Britain for 20 years, but he's still *very Italian*.

**B** In spoken English in particular, we can use *good and...*, *lovely and...*, and *nice and...* followed by another gradable adjective in order to emphasise the second adjective. Possible patterns include: *good and ready* and more colloquially *good and proper/relaxed/strong* (but not usually 'good and beautiful/rich/tall'); *lovely and cosy/dry/sunny/warm* (but not usually 'lovely and decent/empty short'); *nice and bright/clean/cold/comfortable/early/fresh/quiet/simple/soft/tidy/warm* (but not usually 'nice and interesting/handsome/exciting'):

- ☐ If you're all feeling *good and relaxed* after the break, let's get on with the meeting.
- ☐ It's *lovely and warm* in here. Freezing outside, though.
- ☐ 'Shall we get some strawberries?' 'Yes, they look *nice and fresh*.'

We can also link comparative adjectives (see Unit 72) with *and* to talk about an increasing degree of the quality described in the adjective. We use *more and more + adjective* in a similar way:

- ☐ As she got *more and more excited*, her voice got *higher and higher and louder and louder*.
- ☐ The taxi driver just drove *faster and faster and faster* until I told him to stop, and I got out.



- 68.1 Choose from these adjectives to complete the sentences. Use each of the adjectives twice, once with a gradable sense and once with a non-gradable sense. With a gradable sense, write very before the adjective. It may help to use a dictionary for this exercise. (Ai)

critical empty false late original straight

- 1 The novel was praised by the judges for its very original use of language.
- 2 I wasn't frightened by the manager's warning that I would be dismissed if I came late again. It was just a/an \_\_\_\_\_ threat that she had used before.
- 3 The train is \_\_\_\_\_ again. I wonder if the bad weather has delayed it.
- 4 The report was \_\_\_\_\_ of the police officers involved in the investigation.
- 5 I had a/an \_\_\_\_\_ choice between working for my father and having no job at all.
- 6 She was accused of giving \_\_\_\_\_ information during the trial.
- 7 After such a long period without rain, the reservoirs are now \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 The driver of the overturned lorry was in a/an \_\_\_\_\_ condition in hospital last night.
- 9 I was given the oil painting by my \_\_\_\_\_ uncle Simon.
- 10 The \_\_\_\_\_ fireplaces had been removed and replaced by more modern ones.
- 11 The path to the summit of the hill was \_\_\_\_\_ and steep.
- 12 Many of the people I met were quite sincere, but some seemed \_\_\_\_\_, so that I could never be sure if they meant what they said.

- 68.2 Complete the sentences with these adverb + adjective phrases. Use the same adjective in each pair of sentences, but include the adverb in only one. The first pair is done for you. (Aii)

(largely) academic    ~~(fairly)~~ average    (extremely) diplomatic  
(very) human    (intensely) private    (highly) technical

- 1 a The average temperature on the island is a pleasant 23.4°C.  
b Brecston is a/an fairly average town in the south of England.
- 2 a The instructions were \_\_\_\_\_ and clearly meant for an expert.  
b Paul got a job providing \_\_\_\_\_ support for people having computing problems.
- 3 a Being frightened in this situation is a \_\_\_\_\_ response and nothing to be ashamed of.  
b Near the top of the mountain there were signs of \_\_\_\_\_ habitation, perhaps centuries old.
- 4 a I found it difficult to understand the \_\_\_\_\_ talk that Professor Downs gave.  
b The \_\_\_\_\_ standards at the school are very high.
- 5 a He worked hard to afford a \_\_\_\_\_ education for his three children.  
b She was a/an \_\_\_\_\_ person and had few close friends.
- 6 a After Mary left university she worked in the \_\_\_\_\_ service for a number of years.  
b When he was asked to comment on the French President's decision he gave a/an \_\_\_\_\_ answer, not wanting to appear critical.

- 68.3 Suggest a phrase to complete each sentence. Begin with good/lovely/nice + and ... and then choose an appropriate adjective, as in 1. (B)

- 1 Now that the room is painted yellow, it looks lovely and bright.
- 2 I've put you in the spare room at the back of the house, so it'll be \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 'Have you felt the material my new coat's made of?' 'Oh, it's \_\_\_\_\_.'
- 4 The oranges looked quite old, but when I cut into them they were \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 There's no point in trying to persuade Tom. He won't make up his mind until he's \_\_\_\_\_.

# Participle adjectives and compound adjectives

- A** Some -ing forms (present participles) and -ed forms (past participles) of verbs can be used as adjectives. Most of these *participle adjectives* can be used before the noun they describe or following linking verbs (see Unit 21):

- ☐ The hotel had a **welcoming atmosphere**.
- ☐ I found this **broken plate** in the kitchen cupboard.
- ☐ The students' tests results **were pleasing**.
- ☐ My mother **seemed delighted** with the present.

- B** We can use many participle adjectives *immediately* after nouns when they identify or define the noun. This use is similar to *defining relative clauses* (see GR: J1-J2) and they are often called 'reduced relatives':

- ☐ I counted the number of **people waiting**. (or ...*people who were waiting*.)
- ☐ We had to pay for the **rooms used**. (or ...*the rooms that were used*.)

Some of these are rarely used before the noun:

- ☐ None of the **candidates applying** was accepted. (*but not ...the applying candidates...*)
- ☐ My watch was among the **things taken**. (*but not ...the taken things.*)

Participle adjectives like this include **caused, found, included, provided**.

Others can be used before *or* immediately after nouns. For example, we can say:

- ☐ Rub the **area infected** with this cream.      or      ☐ Rub the **infected area** with this cream.
- ☐ The **crowd watching** grew restless.      or      ☐ The **watching crowd** grew restless.

Participle adjectives like this include **affected, alleged, allocated, broken, chosen, identified, interested, remaining, resulting, stolen**.

- C** In formal English, **that** and **those** can be used as pronouns before a participle adjective:

- ☐ The office temperature is lower than **that required** by law. (= the temperature which is required)
- ☐ The quality of the motors is lower than **those manufactured** elsewhere. (= the motors which are manufactured elsewhere)

Notice that **those** can mean 'people':

- ☐ Here is some advice for **those** (= people) **preparing** to go on holiday.

- D** Many *compound adjectives* include a participle adjective. Common patterns are:

*adverb + -ed participle*

- ☐ They are **well-behaved** children.

*adverb + -ing participle*

- ☐ China's economic boom is generating a **fast-growing** market at home.

*adjective + -ed participle*

- ☐ She seems to live on **ready-made** frozen meals.

*adjective + -ing participle*

- ☐ He's the **longest-serving** employee in the company.

*noun + -ed participle*

- ☐ The public square was **tree-lined**.

*noun + -ing participle*

- ☐ I hope it will be a **money-making** enterprise.

*-ed participle + particle*

- ☐ Did it really happen, or was it a **made-up** story?

(from two-word verbs)

We can use some participle adjectives *only* in adjective compounds. For example, we can't say '...behaved children' or '...a making enterprise' as the sense is incomplete without the adverb or noun. Other compounds like this include **London-based, Paris-born, brick-built, easy-going, peace-keeping, long-lasting, good-looking, home-made, hair-raising, far-reaching, well-resourced, sweet-smelling, strange-sounding, soft-spoken, sour-tasting, nerve-wracking**.

Notice that many other compound adjectives do not include participle adjectives:

- ☐ The problem is **short-term**.
- ☐ It was just a **small-scale** project.

- 69.1 Replace the underlined parts of these sentences with a present or past participle adjective formed from one of the following verbs. Give alternative positions for the adjective if possible. (B)

~~cause~~ identify include interest provide remain result

- 1 I offered to pay for any damage that was the result. caused (not ...any caused damage.)
- 2 Steps are being taken by telephone engineers to solve the problems which have been noticed.
- 3 Visitors who want to find out more can buy a booklet with further information.
- 4 Please answer the questions on the sheet that has been given to you.
- 5 The holiday cost £1200, with flights which were part of the total.
- 6 Although he didn't want to appear on TV, the publicity that was the consequence was good for his business.
- 7 Just before serving the pasta, sprinkle over any cheese that is left over.

In which of the sentences can the participle adjective you have written be placed before the noun?

- 69.2 Complete the sentences with either that or those followed by an appropriate participle adjective. (C)

- 1 Her time for the 10,000 metres was four seconds faster than \_\_\_\_\_ by the winner of last month's European Championship.
- 2 Vegetables from the east of the country are generally cheaper than \_\_\_\_\_ in the west.
- 3 The company claims that its electric goods are more reliable than \_\_\_\_\_ by its competitors.
- 4 The top wind speed was even higher than \_\_\_\_\_ in the great storm of 1987.
- 5 Levels of heart disease among people in rural areas are considerably lower than among \_\_\_\_\_ in urban areas.

- 69.3 Complete the second sentences using a compound adjective from D to replace the underlined information in the first sentences. (D)

- 1 The company is organised from New York. It is a New York-based company.
- 2 The school has all the things it needs, with sufficient books and computers. The school is \_\_\_\_\_, with sufficient books and computers.
- 3 I found that the whole experience made me tense and worried. I found the whole experience \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 The proposed changes will have a major influence on a large number of people. The proposed changes will be \_\_\_\_\_.

- 69.4 Combine the following words to make compound adjectives to replace the underlined parts of these sentences. Make any other necessary changes. (D)

clean eye ill wide

catching equipped ranging shaven

- 1 At the age of 16 children do not have the ability or experience to take on the role of parents. are ill-equipped.
- 2 The discussions between the presidents dealt with a great variety of topics. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 I almost didn't recognise Mark. When I last saw him he had a beard and moustache, but now he has no beard or moustache. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 The advertisements for the new car are very noticeable. \_\_\_\_\_.



# Unit 70 Adjective + to-infinitive, -ing, that-clause, wh-clause

**A** When an adjective comes after a linking verb (e.g. appear, be, become, seem; see Unit 21) we can use a number of patterns after the adjective including a **to-infinitive**, **-ing**, **that-clause**, and **wh-clause**. (For **It + linking verb + adjective**, see B.)

	adjective +	example adjectives used in this pattern
i	<b>to-infinitive</b> □ You're free <i>to leave</i> at any time you want.	(un)able, careful, crazy, curious, difficult, easy, foolish, free, good, hard, impossible, inclined, mad, nice, prepared, ready, stupid, welcome, willing
ii	<b>-ing</b> □ He was busy <i>doing</i> his homework.	busy, crazy, foolish, mad, stupid; (after the verb feel) awful, awkward, bad, good, guilty, terrible
iii	<b>that-clause</b> □ He became worried ( <i>that</i> ) she might leap out from behind a door.	afraid, alarmed, amazed, angry, annoyed, ashamed, astonished, aware, concerned, disappointed, glad, (un)happy, pleased, shocked, sorry, upset, worried; certain, confident, positive, sure
iv	<b>wh-clause</b> □ I'm not certain (of/about) <i>why</i> he wants to borrow the money	afraid, not aware/unaware, not certain/uncertain, doubtful, not sure/unsure, worried
v	<b>to-infinitive or that-clause</b> □ She was afraid <i>to say</i> anything. □ I was afraid <i>that</i> I would be late.	the adjectives in iii above, except aware, confident and positive
vi	<b>to-infinitive or -ing</b> □ He'd be stupid <i>to leave</i> now. □ He'd be stupid <i>giving up</i> the job.	crazy, foolish, mad, stupid
vii	<b>-ing or that-clause</b> □ She felt awful <i>leaving</i> him with all the clearing up. □ She felt awful <i>that</i> she wasn't able to help.	(after the verb feel) awful, awkward, bad, good, guilty, terrible

## **B** It + linking verb + adjective

We can sometimes use **it + linking verb + adjective + to-infinitive** as an alternative to **subject + linking verb + adjective + to-infinitive** (see also Units 96 and 97). Compare:

- She is easy *to understand*. and It is easy *to understand her*.
- The fireworks were amazing *to watch*. and It was amazing *to watch* the fireworks.

Notice that in informal speech we can use an **-ing** form instead of a **to-infinitive**:

- It is easy *understanding her*. □ It was amazing *watching* the fireworks.

Other adjectives that can be used in this pattern include **annoying**, **awkward**, **easy**, **good**, **interesting**, **lovely**, **simple**, **terrific**, **wonderful**. Notice that we can use a similar pattern with adjective + **wh-** or **that-clause** (see Unit 96A):

- It is not clear *why* he did it. □ It was odd *that* she left so suddenly.

After certain adjectives we often include **of + subject** between the adjective and a **to-infinitive**:

- It was rude (of *them*) *to criticise her*. (or They were rude *to criticise her*.)

Other adjectives which often take **of + subject** in this pattern include **brave**, **kind**, **mean**, **thoughtful**, **unprofessional**, **unreasonable**.

When we talk about how somebody reacts to a situation we can use **it + make** with an adjective and **to-infinitive**, **-ing** or **that-clause**:

- It made me angry (to *discover*) that so much money was wasted. (or It made me angry *discovering* that...; or I was angry *to discover* that...)

Other adjectives used in this way include **ashamed**, **furious**, **glad**, **miserable**, **nervous**, **sad**, **tired**, **uncomfortable**.

70.1 Choose an appropriate verb to complete these sentences. Use a to-infinitive or -ing form, giving alternatives where possible. (A)

cheat    earn    know    leave    open    panic  
reduce    resign    see    talk    turn    underestimate

- 1 I'm afraid I can't afford that much. Would you be prepared \_\_\_\_\_ the price if I pay cash?
- 2 Jack was stupid \_\_\_\_\_ in the exam. He was bound to get caught.
- 3 He felt good \_\_\_\_\_ that he had helped solve the problem.
- 4 Don't feel that you need to stay to the very end of the conference. You're free \_\_\_\_\_ at any time.
- 5 I hadn't been to Wolverton since I was a child, and I was curious \_\_\_\_\_ how it had changed.
- 6 Anyone trying to climb the mountain would be foolish \_\_\_\_\_ the challenge facing them.
- 7 People told me I was crazy \_\_\_\_\_ a shop in this part of the city, but it's been very successful so far.
- 8 She was too busy \_\_\_\_\_ on the phone to notice that Dave had come into the room.
- 9 She felt guilty \_\_\_\_\_ such a lot when so many people in the country were living in poverty.
- 10 It's so difficult to get a job at the moment you'd be mad \_\_\_\_\_.
- 11 Some people would be inclined \_\_\_\_\_ if they smelt smoke in the house.
- 12 I felt awful \_\_\_\_\_ people away from the concert, but there just wasn't any more room.

70.2 Here is part of a letter in which Sarah is describing her holiday in Thailand with Mark. Where necessary, correct the italicised text. (A)

...After a couple of days Mark announced that he was going walking in the hills near the hotel. I thought he was (1) *stupid that he would go* alone and that it was dangerous. But he said that he was (2) *confident not to get lost*. We ended up arguing and finally he stormed off, saying he (3) *wasn't sure when* he'd be back. I went into town, but I felt a bit (4) *guilty to shop* all day. On the bus on the way back to the hotel I got talking to a local woman and (5) *was concerned learning* that it got very cold in the hills at night. I started (6) *to get worried that* he might be in danger, but I (7) *wasn't certain what* to do. But when I got back to the hotel, there was Mark (8) *busy to drink* orange juice by the pool. He'd decided not to go walking after all! He said he (9) *was sorry upsetting me*. At first I was angry and said he was stubborn and that he just (10) *wasn't prepared admitting* that I'd been right. But really I was just (11) *pleased that* he was safe...

70.3 Rewrite these sentences using It + be + adjective... If possible, use of + a personal pronoun after the adjective (as in 1). (B)

- 1 She was brave to spend the night in the old house alone.  
It was brave of her to spend the night in the old house alone.
- 2 Such a magnificent performance was wonderful to hear.
- 3 You were mean to eat all the cake and not leave any for me.
- 4 They were unreasonable to complain about the exam results.
- 5 The top of the jar was awkward to get off.
- 6 The shelves were simple to put up.
- 7 He was unprofessional to criticise the head teacher in front of the staff.
- 8 You were kind to give birthday presents to the children.

70.4 Complete these sentences with It made me... and any appropriate adjective. (B)

- 1 It made me angry to hear how she had been insulted.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ listening to his lies.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ that we wouldn't be working together again.
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ to learn how badly we treated immigrants in the 1950s.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ hearing the dentist's drill as I sat in the waiting room.