Unit 105 Comparison 1 (cheaper, more expensive etc.)

A Study these examples:

How shall we travel? By car or by train?

Let's go by car. It's **cheaper**.
Don't go by train. It's **more expensive**.

Cheaper and **more expensive** are *comparative* forms.

After comparatives you can use **than** (see Unit 107):

- It's **cheaper** to go by car **than** by train.
- Going by train is **more expensive than** going by car.

B The comparative form is **-er** or **more** ... .

We use **-er** for short words (one syllable):

cheap → cheaper	**fast** → faster
large → larger	**thin** → thinner

We also use **-er** for two-syllable words that end in **-y** (**-y** → **ier**):

lucky → luckier	early → earlier
easy → easier	pretty → prettier

For spelling, see Appendix 6.

We use **more** ... for longer words (two syllables or more):

more serious	**more often**
more expensive	**more comfortable**

We also use **more** ... for adverbs that end in **-ly**:

more slowly	**more seriously**
more quietly	**more carefully**

Compare these examples:

- You're **older** than me.
- The exam was fairly easy – **easier** than I expected.
- Can you walk a bit **faster**?
- I'd like to have a **bigger** car.
- Last night I went to bed **earlier** than usual.

- You're **more patient** than me.
- The exam was quite difficult – **more difficult** than I expected.
- Can you walk a bit **more slowly**?
- I'd like to have a **more reliable** car.
- I don't play tennis much these days. I used to play **more often**.

You can use **-er** *or* **more** ... with some two-syllable adjectives, especially:

clever **narrow** **quiet** **shallow** **simple**

- It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere **quieter / more quiet**?

C A few adjectives and adverbs have irregular comparative forms:

good/well → better

- The garden looks **better** since you tidied it up.
- I know him **well** – probably **better** than anybody else knows him.

bad/badly → worse:

- 'How is your headache? Better?' 'No, it's **worse**.'
- He did very badly in the exam – **worse** than expected.

far → further (*or* **farther**):

- It's a long walk from here to the park – **further** than I thought. (*or* **farther** than)

Further (*but not* farther) can also mean 'more' or 'additional':

- Let me know if you hear any **further** news. (= any more news)

Comparison 2–3 → Units 106–107 Superlatives (cheapest / most expensive etc.) → Unit 108

Exercises

Unit 105

105.1 Complete the sentences using a comparative form (older / more important etc.).

1 It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere ....quieter.... ?
2 This coffee is very weak. I like it a bit ..... .
3 The hotel was surprisingly big. I expected it to be ..... .
4 The hotel was surprisingly cheap. I expected it to be ..... .
5 The weather is too cold here. I'd like to live somewhere ..... .
6 My job is a bit boring sometimes. I'd like to do something ..... .
7 It's a pity you live so far away. I wish you lived ..... .
8 I was surprised how easy it was to use the computer. I thought it would be ..... .
9 Your work isn't very good. I'm sure you can do ..... .
10 Don't worry. The situation isn't so bad. It could be ..... .
11 I was surprised we got here so quickly. I expected the journey to take ..... .
12 You're talking very loudly. Can you speak a bit ..... ?
13 You hardly ever phone me. Why don't you phone me ..... ?
14 You're standing too near the camera. Can you move a bit ..... away?
15 You were a bit depressed yesterday, but you look ..... today.

105.2 Complete the sentences. Each time use the comparative form of one of the words in the box. Use than where necessary.

big	crowded	~~early~~	easily	high	important
interested	peaceful	~~reliable~~	serious	simple	thin

1 I was feeling tired last night, so I went to bed ....earlier than.... usual.
2 I'd like to have a ....more reliable.... car. The one I've got keeps breaking down.
3 Unfortunately her illness was ..... we thought at first.
4 You look ..... . Have you lost weight?
5 I want a ..... flat. We don't have enough space here.
6 He doesn't study very hard. He's ..... in having a good time.
7 Health and happiness are ..... money.
8 The instructions were very complicated. They could have been ..... .
9 There were a lot of people on the bus. It was ..... usual.
10 I like living in the countryside. It's ..... living in a town.
11 You'll find your way around the town ..... if you have a good map.
12 In some parts of the country, prices are ..... in others.

105.3 Read the situations and complete the sentences. Use a comparative form (-er or more ...).

1 Yesterday the temperature was six degrees. Today it's only three degrees.
It's ....colder today than it was yesterday.....
2 The journey takes four hours by car and five hours by train.
It takes .....
3 Dave and I went for a run. I ran ten kilometres. Dave stopped after eight kilometres.
I ran .....
4 Chris and Joe both did badly in the test. Chris got 30%, but Joe only got 25%.
Joe did .....
5 I expected my friends to arrive at about 4 o'clock. In fact they arrived at 2.30.
My friends .....
6 You can go by bus or by train. The buses run every 30 minutes. The trains run every hour.
The buses .....
7 We were very busy at work today. We're not usually as busy as that.
We .....

Unit 106 Comparison 2 (much better / any better / better and better / the sooner the better)

A Before comparatives you can use:

much **a lot** **far** (= a lot) **a bit** **a little** **slightly** (= a little)

- Let's go by car. It's **much cheaper.** (*or* **a lot cheaper**)
- 'How do you feel?' '**Much better**, thanks.'
- Don't go by train. It's **a lot more expensive.** (*or* **much more expensive**)
- Could you speak **a bit more slowly?** (*or* **a little more slowly**)
- This bag is **slightly heavier** than the other one.
- Her illness was **far more serious** than we thought at first. (*or* **much more serious / a lot more serious**)

B You can use **any** and **no** + comparative (**any longer / no bigger** etc.):

- I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting **any longer.** (= not even a little longer)
- We expected their house to be very big, but it's **no bigger** than ours. *or* ... it **isn't any bigger** than ours. (= not even a little bigger)
- How do you feel now? Do you feel **any better**?
- This hotel is better than the other one, and it's **no more expensive.**

C **Better and better / more and more** etc.

We repeat comparatives (**better and better** etc.) to say that something changes continuously:

- Your English is improving. It's getting **better and better.**
- The city is growing fast. It's getting **bigger and bigger.**
- Cathy got **more and more bored** in her job. In the end she left.
- These days **more and more** people are learning English.

D **The ... the ...**

You can say **the** (sooner/bigger/more etc.) **the better**:

- 'What time shall we leave?' '**The sooner the better.**' (= as soon as possible)
- A: What sort of box do you want? A big one?
  B: Yes, **the bigger the better.** (= as big as possible)
- When you're travelling, **the less luggage** you have **the better.**

We also use **the ... the ...** to say that one thing depends on another thing:

- **The warmer** the weather, **the better** I feel. (= if the weather is warmer, I feel better)
- **The sooner** we leave, **the earlier** we will arrive.
- **The younger** you are, **the easier** it is to learn.
- **The more expensive** the hotel, **the better** the service.
- **The more** electricity you use, **the higher** your bill will be.
- **The more** I thought about the plan, **the less** I liked it.

E **Older and elder**

The comparative of **old** is **older**:

- David looks **older** than he really is.

You can use **elder** (*or* **older**) when you talk about people in a family. You can say (**my/your** etc.) **elder sister/brother/daughter/son**:

- **My elder sister** is a TV producer. (*or* My **older** sister ...)

We say 'my **elder sister**', but we do not say that 'somebody is elder':

- My sister is **older** than me. (*not* elder than me)

Any/no → Unit 86 **Comparison 1, 3** → Units 105, 107 **Eldest** → Unit 108D
Even + comparative → Unit 112C

Exercises

Unit 106

106.1 Use the words in brackets to complete the sentences. Use **much / a bit etc. + a comparative** form. Use **than** where necessary.

1 Her illness was ...much more serious than... we thought at first. (much / serious)
2 This bag is too small. I need something ..... . (much / big)
3 I'm afraid the problem is ..... it seems. (much / complicated)
4 It was very hot yesterday. Today it's ..... . (a bit / cool)
5 I enjoyed our visit to the museum. It was ..... I expected. (far / interesting)
6 You're driving too fast. Can you drive ..... ? (a bit / slowly)
7 It's ..... to learn a foreign language in a country where it is spoken. (a lot / easy)
8 I thought she was younger than me, but in fact she's ..... . (slightly / old)

106.2 Complete the sentences using **any/no + comparative**. Use **than** where necessary.

1 I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting ...any longer... .
2 I'm sorry I'm a bit late, but I couldn't get here ..... .
3 This shop isn't expensive. The prices are ..... anywhere else.
4 I need to stop for a rest. I can't walk ..... .
5 The traffic isn't particularly bad today. It's ..... usual.

106.3 Complete the sentences using the structure in Section C (... **and** ...).

1 Cathy got ...more and more bored... in her job. In the end she left. (bored)
2 That hole in your sweater is getting ..... . (big)
3 My bags seemed to get ..... as I carried them. (heavy)
4 As I waited for my interview, I became ..... . (nervous)
5 As the day went on, the weather got ..... . (bad)
6 Health care is becoming ..... . (expensive)
7 Since Anna went to Canada, her English has got ..... . (good)
8 As the conversation went on, Paul became ..... . (talkative)

106.4 These sentences are like those in Section D. Use the words in brackets (in the correct form) to complete the sentences.

1 I like warm weather.
The warmer the weather, ...the better I feel... . (feel)
2 I didn't really like him when we first met.
But the more I got to know him, ... (like)
3 If you're in business, you want to make a profit.
The more goods you sell, ... (profit)
4 It's hard to concentrate when you're tired.
The more tired you are, ... (hard)
5 Kate had to wait a very long time.
The longer she waited, ... (impatient / become)

106.5 Which is correct, **older** or **elder**? Or both of them?

1 My ✓ older / ✓ elder sister is a TV producer. (older *and* elder *are both correct*)
2 I'm surprised Diane is only 25. I thought she was older / elder.
3 Jane's younger sister is still at school. Her older / elder sister is a nurse.
4 Martin is older / elder than his brother.

Unit 107 Comparison 3 (as ... as / than)

A Study this example situation:

Sarah, Joe and David are all very rich. Sarah has £20 million, Joe has £15 million and David has £10 million. So:

Joe is rich.
He is **richer than** David.
But he **isn't as rich as** Sarah.
(= Sarah is **richer than** he is)

Some more examples of **not as ... (as)**:

- □ Richard **isn't as old as** he looks. (= he looks **older than** he is)
- □ The town centre **wasn't as crowded as** usual. (= it is usually **more crowded**)
- □ Jenny **didn't** do **as well** in the exam as she had hoped. (= she had hoped to do **better**)
- □ The weather is better today. It's **not as cold**. (= yesterday was **colder**)
- □ I **don't** know **as many** people as you do. (= you know **more** people)
- □ 'How much did it cost? Fifty pounds?' 'No, **not as much** as that.' (= less than fifty pounds)

You can also say **not so ... (as)**:

- □ It's not warm, but it isn't **so** cold as yesterday. (= it isn't **as** cold **as** ...)

Less ... than is similar to **not as ... as**:

- □ I spent **less money than** you. (= I **didn't** spend **as** much money **as** you)
- □ The city centre was **less crowded than** usual. (= it **wasn't as** crowded **as** usual)

B We also use **as ... as** (*but not* so ... as) in positive sentences and in questions:

- □ I'm sorry I'm late. I got here **as fast as** I could.
- □ There's plenty of food. You can have **as much as** you want.
- □ Let's walk. It's **just as quick as** taking the bus.
- □ Can you send me the money **as soon as possible**, please?

Also **twice as ... as, three times as ... as** etc. :

- □ Petrol is **twice as expensive as** it was a few years ago.
- □ Their house is about **three times as big as** ours.

C We say **the same as** (*not* the same like):

- □ Laura's salary is **the same as** mine. *or* Laura gets **the same** salary **as** me.
- □ David is **the same** age **as** James.
- □ 'What would you like to drink?' 'I'll have **the same as** you.'

D **Than me / than I am** etc.

You can say:

- □ You're taller **than I am**. *or* You're taller **than me**.
  (*not usually* You're taller than I)
- □ He's not as clever **as she is**. *or* He's not as clever **as her**.
- □ They have more money **than we have**. *or* They have more money **than us**.
- □ I can't run as fast as **he can**. *or* I can't run as fast **as him**.

Comparison 1–2 → Units 105–106 As long as → Unit 115B As and like → Unit 117

Exercises

Unit 107

107.1 Complete the sentences using as ... as.

1 I'm quite tall, but you are taller. I'm not as tall as you .
2 My salary is high, but yours is higher. My salary isn't .
3 You know a bit about cars, but I know more.
You don't .
4 It's still cold, but it was colder yesterday.
It isn't .
5 I still feel quite tired, but I felt a lot more tired yesterday.
I don't .
6 Our neighbours have lived here for quite a long time, but we've lived here longer.
Our neighbours haven't .
7 I was a bit nervous before the interview, but usually I'm a lot more nervous.
I wasn't .

107.2 Write a new sentence with the same meaning.

1 Richard is younger than he looks. Richard isn't as old as he looks .
2 I didn't spend as much money as you. You spent more money than me .
3 The station was nearer than I thought. The station wasn't .
4 The meal didn't cost as much as I expected. The meal cost .
5 I go out less than I used to. I don't .
6 Karen's hair isn't as long as it used to be. Karen used to .
7 I know them better than you do. You don't .
8 There are fewer people at this meeting than at the last one.
There aren't .

107.3 Complete the sentences using as ... as + the following:

bad **comfortable** **~~fast~~** **long** **often** **quietly** **soon** **well** **well-qualified**

1 I'm sorry I'm late. I got here as fast as I could.
2 It was a difficult question. I answered it I could.
3 'How long can I stay with you?' 'You can stay you like.'
4 I need the information quickly, so let me know possible.
5 I like to keep fit, so I go swimming I can.
6 I didn't want to wake anybody, so I came in I could.

In the following sentences use just as ... as.

7 I'm going to sleep on the floor. It's the bed.
8 Why did he get the job rather than me? I'm him.
9 At first I thought he was nice, but really he's everybody else.

107.4 Write sentences using the same as.

1 David and James are both 22 years old. David is the same age as James .
2 You and I both have dark brown hair. Your hair .
3 I arrived at 10.25 and so did you. I .
4 My birthday is 5 April. Tom's birthday is 5 April too. My .

107.5 Complete the sentences with than ... or as ... .

1 I can't reach as high as you. You are taller than me .
2 He doesn't know much. I know more .
3 I don't work particularly hard. Most people work as hard .
4 We were very surprised. Nobody was more surprised .
5 She's not a very good player. I'm a better player .
6 They've been very lucky. I wish we were as lucky .

Unit 108 Superlatives (the longest / the most enjoyable etc.)

A Study these examples:

What is **the longest** river in the world?
What was **the most enjoyable** holiday you've ever had?

Longest and **most enjoyable** are *superlative* forms.

B The superlative form is **-est** or **most** ... . In general, we use **-est** for short words and **most** ... for longer words. The rules are the same as those for the comparative – see Unit 105.

	long → longest	**hot** → hottest	**easy** → easiest	**hard** → hardest
but	**most** famous	**most** boring	**most** difficult	**most** expensive

A few adjectives are irregular:

good → **best** bad → **worst** **far** → **furthest/farthest**

For spelling, see Appendix 6.

C We normally use **the** before a superlative (**the** longest / **the** most famous etc.):

- Yesterday was **the hottest** day of the year.
- The film was really boring. It was **the most boring** film I've ever seen.
- She is a really nice person – one of **the nicest** people I know.
- Why does he always come to see me at **the worst** possible moment?

Compare superlative and comparative:

- This hotel is **the cheapest** in town. *(superlative)*
  This hotel is **cheaper** than all the others in town. *(comparative)*
- He's **the most patient** person I've ever met.
  He's much **more patient** than I am.

D **Oldest** and **eldest**

The superlative of **old** is **oldest**:

- That church is **the oldest** building in the town. (*not* the eldest)

We use **eldest** (*or* **oldest**) when we are talking about people in a family:

- **My eldest son** is 13 years old. (*or* My **oldest** son)
- Are you **the eldest** in your family? (*or* the **oldest**)

E After superlatives we normally use **in** with places:

- What's the longest river **in the world**? (*not* of the world)
- We had a nice room. It was one of the best **in the hotel**. (*not* of the hotel)

We also use **in** for organisations and groups of people (a class / a company etc.):

- Who is the youngest student **in the class**? (*not* of the class)

For a period of time, we normally use **of**:

- What was the happiest day **of your life**?
- Yesterday was the hottest day **of the year**.

F We often use the *present perfect* (**I have done**) after a superlative (see also Unit 8A):

- What's **the most important** decision **you've ever had** to make?
- That was **the best** holiday **I've had** for a long time.

Comparison (cheaper / more expensive etc.) → Units 105–107 Elder → Unit 106E

Exercises

Unit 108

108.1 Complete the sentences. Use a superlative (-est or most ...) + a preposition (of or in).

1 It's a very good room. It is the best room in the hotel.
2 It's a very cheap restaurant. It's ..... the town.
3 It was a very happy day. It was ..... my life.
4 She's a very intelligent student. She ..... the class.
5 It's a very valuable painting. It ..... the gallery.
6 Spring is a very busy time for me. It ..... the year.

In the following sentences use **one of** + a superlative + a preposition.

7 It's a very good room. It is one of the best rooms in the hotel.
8 He's a very rich man. He's one ..... the world.
9 It's a very big castle. It ..... Britain.
10 She's a very good player. She ..... the team.
11 It was a very bad experience. It ..... my life.
12 He's a very dangerous criminal. He ..... the country.

108.2 Complete the sentences. Use a superlative (-est or most ...) or a comparative (-er or more ...).

1 We stayed at the cheapest hotel in the town. (cheap)
2 Our hotel was cheaper than all the others in the town. (cheap)
3 The United States is very large, but Canada is ..... . (large)
4 What's ..... country in the world? (small)
5 I wasn't feeling well yesterday, but I feel a bit ..... today. (good)
6 It was an awful day. It was ..... day of my life. (bad)
7 What is ..... sport in your country? (popular)
8 Everest is ..... mountain in the world. It is ..... than any other mountain. (high)
9 We had a great holiday. It was one of ..... holidays we've ever had. (enjoyable)
10 I prefer this chair to the other one. It's ..... . (comfortable)
11 What's ..... way of getting from here to the station? (quick)
12 Sue and Kevin have got three daughters. ..... is 14 years old. (old)

108.3 What do you say in these situations? Use a superlative + ever. Use the words in brackets (in the correct form).

1 You've just been to the cinema. The film was extremely boring. You tell your friend:
(boring / film / see) That's the most boring film I've ever seen .
2 Your friend has just told you a joke, which you think is very funny. You say:
(funny / joke / hear) That's ..... .
3 You're drinking coffee with a friend. It's really good coffee. You say:
(good / coffee / taste) This ..... .
4 You are talking to a friend about Mary. Mary is very generous. You tell your friend about her:
(generous / person / meet) She ..... .
5 You have just run ten kilometres. You've never run further than this. You say to your friend:
(far / run) That ..... .
6 You decided to give up your job. Now you think this was a bad mistake. You say to your friend:
(bad / mistake / make) It ..... .
7 Your friend meets a lot of people, some of them famous. You ask your friend:
(famous / person / meet?) Who ..... ?