

Session 2

You might say that English is **too confusing** and there are **too many rules**. Have you really got **enough time** to learn them all? Well, it can be **very difficult**, that's true. But don't make excuses – this session will help you understand the words **too**, **very** and **enough**.

Activity 1

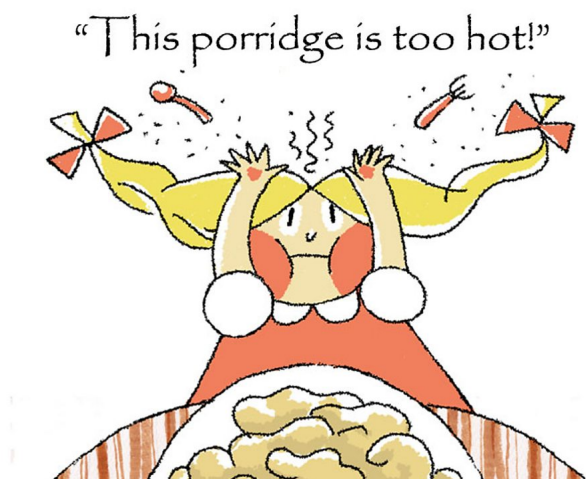
Modifying adjectives with 'too', 'very' and 'absolutely'

"This porridge is too hot!"

In Session 1, we heard the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. The young girl went into the bears' house, ate their porridge, sat in their chairs, and got into their beds! The bears found Goldilocks in the end, but she managed to escape and the story didn't have a bad ending.

But what language we can learn from the story of Goldilocks? We're going to look at some of the words from the story that indicate **degree**: **too**, **very** and **enough**. First, look at these pictures - what do you think the words mean? Then, read the grammar explanation and try the activity.

Have a look at this first picture.



Goldilocks is talking about the porridge and how hot it is. But what does she mean when she says it is **too hot**?

What about in this picture?



What does it mean when we say she was **very tired**?

Too + adjective

Let's look at the first example. The porridge was **too hot**. Could Goldilocks eat it? No. What about the second bowl? Well, that was **too cold**. Could she eat this bowl of porridge? Again, the answer is no. The word **too** shows there is a problem, or something bad. Look at some more examples.

*Goldilocks sat in the first chair, but it was **too big**.* (The problem is the size of the chair: it is big and Goldilocks is small, so she can't get comfortable.)

*Goldilocks lay down in the first bed, but it was **too hard**.* (This time, the problem is the softness of the bed. It's hard, so Goldilocks can't rest comfortably.)

*I really like these boots, but they're **too expensive**.* (The problem is the price of the boots: I can't afford to buy them.)

*I was **too busy** to take a break, so I missed my TV programme.* (I had a lot of work and this was a problem because I couldn't take a break and watch TV.)

The form is **too + adjective**.

too hot
too cold
too big

BE CAREFUL: If we say a sentence with **too** in the negative form, then we mean it **isn't** a problem. The form is **not + too + adjective**.

*I can eat this porridge - it's **not too hot** and it's **not too cold**.*

Very + adjective

Goldilocks was **very tired**. Do you think this is just normal tiredness or something more? Well, the word **very** makes the adjective stronger. Goldilocks was **very tired** so she went to sleep in the baby bear's bed.

The form is **very + adjective**. Here are some more examples.

*Papa bear was **very angry** because someone had slept in his bed.*

*I like your shoes - they're **very nice**!*

*That English test wasn't **very difficult**! Studying with BBC Learning English really helps!*

BE CAREFUL: We don't use **very** with **strong adjectives**. Look here:

*Goldilocks was **terrified**!* (The word terrified already means 'very scared', so we don't say 'very terrified'.)

To make strong adjectives even stronger, use **absolutely**.

*That was the worst play I have ever seen in my life - it was **absolutely terrible**!*

*I've been working day and night - I'm **absolutely exhausted**!*

Other strong adjectives are: **excellent, enormous, correct, incredible, dreadful, perfect**. We hope that one day you will have absolutely excellent English!

To do

How confident are you now about **too, very** and **strong adjectives**? Try this quiz to see how well you know them.

Next

So, you've looked at two words we use to modify adjectives in a sentence: **too** and **very**. **Too** means there is some kind of problem and **very** makes adjectives stronger. You've also learnt about **strong adjectives** and **absolutely**.

Now it's time to learn how to use another word from Goldilocks: **enough**. We'll also look at using **too** with **much** and **many**.

