

## Forming Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

### One-syllable adjectives.

Form the comparative and superlative forms of a one-syllable adjective by adding -er for the comparative form and -est for the superlative.

One-Syllable Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
tall	taller	tallest
old	older	oldest
long	longer	longest

- Mary is **taller** *than* Max.
- Mary is **the tallest** *of* all the students.
- Max is **older** *than* John.
- *Of* the three students, Max is **the oldest**.
- My hair is **longer** *than* your hair.
- Max's story is **the longest** *story I've ever heard*.

If the one-syllable adjective ends with an e, just add -r for the comparative form and -st for the superlative form.

One-Syllable Adjective with Final -e	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
large	larger	largest
wise	wiser	wisest

- Mary's car is **larger** *than* Max's car.
- Mary's house is **the tallest** *of* all the houses on the block.
- Max is **wiser** *than* his brother.
- Max is **the wisest** *person I know*.

If the one-syllable adjective ends with a single consonant with a vowel before it, double the consonant and add -er for the comparative form; and double the consonant and add -est for the superlative form.

One-Syllable Adjective Ending with a Single Consonant with a Single Vowel before It	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
big	bigger	biggest
thin	thinner	thinnest
fat	fatter	fattest

- My dog is **bigger** *than* your dog.
- My dog is **the biggest** *of* all the dogs in the neighborhood.
- Max is **thinner** *than* John.
- *Of* all the students in the class, Max is **the thinnest**.

- My mother is **fatter** *than* your mother.
- Mary is **the fattest** *person I've ever seen*.

### Two-syllable adjectives.

With most two-syllable adjectives, you form the comparative with more and the superlative with most.

Two-Syllable Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
peaceful	more peaceful	most peaceful
pleasant	more pleasant	most pleasant
careful	more careful	most careful
thoughtful	more thoughtful	most thoughtful

- This morning is **more peaceful** *than* yesterday morning.
- Max's house in the mountains is **the most peaceful** *in* the world.
- Max is **more careful** *than* Mike.
- *Of* all the taxi drivers, Jack is **the most careful**.
- Jill is **more thoughtful** *than* your sister.
- Mary is **the most thoughtful** *person I've ever met*.

If the two-syllable adjectives ends with -y, change the **y** to **i** and add -er for the comparative form. For the superlative form change the **y** to **i** and add -est.

Two-Syllable Adjective Ending with -y	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
happy	happier	happiest
angry	angrier	angriest
busy	busier	busiest

- John is **happier** today *than* he was yesterday.
- John is **the happiest** boy *in* the world.
- Max is **angrier** *than* Mary.
- *Of* all of John's victims, Max is **the angriest**.
- Mary is **busier** *than* Max.
- Mary is **the busiest** *person I've ever met*.

Two-syllable adjectives ending in -er, -le, or -ow take -er and -est to form the comparative and superlative forms.

Two-Syllable Adjective Ending with -er, -le, or -ow	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
narrow	narrower	narrowest
gentle	gentler	gentlest

- The roads in this town are **narrower** *than* the roads in the city.
- This road is the **narrowest** *of* all the roads in California.
- Big dogs are **gentler** *than* small dogs.

- *Of* all the dogs in the world, English Mastiffs are **the gentlest**.

### Adjectives with three or more syllables.

For adjectives with three syllables or more, you form the comparative with more and the superlative with most.

Adjective with Three or More Syllables	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
generous	more generous	most generous
important	more important	most important
intelligent	more intelligent	most intelligent

- John is **more generous** *than* Jack.
- John is **the most generous** *of* all the people I know.
- Health is **more important** *than* money.
- *Of* all the people I know, Max is **the most important**.
- Women are **more intelligent** *than* men.
- Mary is **the most intelligent** *person I've ever met*.

### Exceptions.

#### Irregular adjectives.

Irregular Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
good	better	best
bad	worse	worst
far	Farther/further	Farthest/furthest
little	less	least
many	more	most

Italian food is **better** *than* American food.

- My dog is **the best** dog *in* the world.
- My mother's cooking is **worse** *than* your mother's cooking.
- *Of* all the students in the class, Max is **the worst**.

Two-syllable adjectives that follow two rules. These adjectives can be used with **-er** and **-est** and with **more** and **most**.

Two-Syllable Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
clever	cleverer	cleverest
clever	more clever	most clever
gentle	gentler	gentlest
gentle	more gentle	most gentle
friendly	friendlier	friendliest
friendly	more friendly	most friendly

Two-Syllable Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
quiet	quieter	quietest
quiet	more quiet	most quiet
simple	simpler	simplest
simple	more simple	most simple

- Big dogs are **gentler** *than* small dogs.
- *Of* all the dogs in the world, English Mastiffs are **the gentlest**.
- Big dogs are **more gentle** *than* small dogs.
- *Of* all the dogs in the world, English Mastiffs are **the most gentle**.

### AS + ADJECTIVE + AS

To compare people, places, events or things, when there is **no difference**, use **as + adjective + as**.

- Peter is 24 years old. John is 24 years old. Peter is **as old as** John.
- Moscow is **as cold as** St. Petersburg in the winter.
- Einstein is **as famous as** Darwin.
- A tiger is **as dangerous as** a lion.

### The use of Less

Adjectives which form the comparative with the adverb **more** may also be used in a similar way with the adverb **less**. **Less** and **more** have **opposite meanings**.

#### Less ... Than

The following examples illustrate the use of adjectives preceded by **less** and followed by **than**.

e.g. Arnold is less confident **than** Charles is.

The red bicycle is less expensive **than** the blue one.

The first example indicates that Arnold possesses a smaller degree of confidence than Charles does. The second example indicates that the red bicycle has a lower cost than the blue one.

### Not As ... As

In informal English, the following construction is often used:

not as +                      positive  
    form of    +            as  
    adjective

e.g. He is            not as            clever            as            his brother.

For adjectives which form the comparative with **more**, either the construction **less ... than** or the construction **not as ... as** may be used. The construction **not as ... as** is somewhat less formal than the construction **less ... than**.

For instance, the two sentences in each of the following pairs have the same meaning.

e.g. **Formal:** The red bicycle is less expensive **than** the blue one.

**Informal:** The red bicycle is **not as** expensive **as** the blue one.

**Formal:** Arnold is less confident **than** Charles is.

**Informal:** Arnold is **not as** confident **as** Charles is.

Look at these two sentences ,they have similar meanings.

e.g. This chair is **not as** soft **as** that one.

This chair is harder **than** that one.

He is **not as** old **as** his sister.

He is younger **than** his sister.