



ADJECTIVES

Degree of Comparison

English



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Adjectives- Degrees of Comparison

- **What**

Degree of comparison is used to compare a person or a thing with another.

Degree of comparison is a grammatical concept which is used to describe, modify or quantify adjectives or adverbs.

There are 3 varying degrees of comparison:

1. Positive degree
2. Comparative degree
3. Superlative degree

- **Positive Degree**

Positive degree does not offer any comparison. It only describes the quality that exists.

Example:

- i) Swan Martin is rich.
- ii) Lion runs fast.

- **Comparative Degree**

As suggested by the name, it compares the quality between 2 people or things.

Example:

- i) Swan Martin is richer than Bill Gates.
- ii) Lion runs faster than most land animals.

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- **Superlative Degree**

With The superlative shows the greatest degree of comparison.

Example:

i) Jeff Bezos is **the richest** person in the world.

ii) Cheetah is **the fastest** land animal.

Rules governing degrees of comparison

1. A single syllable adjective is made comparative by adding 'er' 'r' 'ier' and superlative by adding 'est' 'st' 'iest'.

POSITIVE	COMPARITIVE	SUPERLATIVE
Cold	Colder	Coldest
Happy	Happier	Happiest
Fine	Finer	Finest
Smart	Smarter	Smartest
Great	Greater	Greatest

Adjectives - Degree of Comparison

2. Adjectives with more than one syllable or ending with 'ed' 'ing' 'ous' 'ful' are made comparative by adding 'more' 'less' and made superlative by adding 'the most' 'the least'.

POSITIVE	COMPARITIVE	SUPERLATIVE
Beautiful	More/less Beautiful	Most/least Beautiful
Dangerous	More/less Dangerous	Most/least Dangerous
Boring	More Boring	Most Boring

3. There are certain adjectives where the word changes completely while changing the degree of comparison.

POSITIVE	COMPARITIVE	SUPERLATIVE
Bad	Worse	Worst
Good	Better	Best
Many	More	Most

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4. There are also some adjectives that can be modified using either form we looked at above. The following are some of the most common:

POSITIVE	COMPARITIVE	SUPERLATIVE
Clever	Cleverer/ less clever	Cleverest/ least clever
Narrow	Narrower	Narrowest
Simple	Simpler	Simplest

5. 'More' is used to compare two qualities of a single thing/person.

Incorrect: She is wiser than brave.

Correct: She is more wise than brave.

6. Double comparative adjectives or superlative adjectives must not be used.

Incorrect: Jeddah tower is more taller than Burj Khalifa.

Correct: Jeddah tower is taller than Burj Khalifa.

7. 'More or most' must never be used with adjectives that give absolute sense.

Incorrect: The diamond is most unique

Correct: The diamond is unique.

8. Some adjectives are accompanied by 'to' and not 'than'.(e.g., senior, junior, superior, inferior, preferable, prefer, elder)

Incorrect: Tom is senior than Pom.

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Correct: Tom is senior to Pom.

9. When comparing two things, similarity should be there, i.e. similar things should be compared.

Incorrect: The design of this bridge is better than the other one.

Correct: The design of this bridge is better than that of the other one.

10. When the comparative degree is used in the superlative degree sense:

• Use 'any other' when thing/person of the same group is compared –

Incorrect: Pihu is taller than any girl in her class.

Correct: Pihu is taller than any other girl in her class.

• Use 'any' if comparison of things/person is outside the group -

Incorrect: Ontario is denser than any other province in Canada.

Correct: Ontario is denser than any province in Canada.

11. When two adjectives in the same sentence are used in different degrees of comparison, both should be complete in themselves.

Incorrect: The king is as good if not worse than his father.

Correct: The king is as good as if not worse than his father.

12. Quantifiers can be used to show whether the difference between the compared thing/person is small or big (e.g., A bit, a little, a lot, far, much, a great deal, significantly, etc)

a. Belarus fared slightly better than India at the Olympics.

b. His game has improved a lot since last season.



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