# Comparatives & superlatives

A2 grammar, speaking and writing practice

**bigger than** **the biggest**



# What do we compare?

Use comparatives for two things. Use superlatives for a group of three or more.

**My bike is faster than your bike.**

**Mount Everest is the highest mountain.**

**COMPARATIVE**

two people, things or places

**SUPERLATIVE**

one person or thing in a group

# The basic patterns



## comparative + than

This bag is lighter than that bag.

## the + superlative

This is the lightest bag in the shop.

**We usually add an adjective after be:  The train is faster.**
**We can also use a noun:  It is the most popular city.**

# Short adjectives: add -er and -est



Most one-syllable adjectives follow this rule.

| adjective | comparative | superlative |
|---|---|---|
| small | smaller | the smallest |
| fast | faster | the fastest |
| cheap | cheaper | the cheapest |
| long | longer | the longest |

**one-syllable adjective → -er / -est**

# Spelling changes



Look at the end of the adjective before you add the ending.

**nice**
**nicer**
**the nicest**

add -r / -st
words ending in -e

**big**
**bigger**
**the biggest**

double the final consonant
big, hot, thin

**happy**
**happier**
**the happiest**

y changes to i
happy, easy, busy

**Do not double: clean → cleaner.  Do not change y after a vowel: grey → greyer.**

# Long adjectives: use more and most



Usually adjectives with two or more syllables use more / most.

**more + adjective + than**

**This film is more interesting than the book.**

**the most + adjective**

**It is the most interesting film this year.**

- more expensive
- more beautiful
- more difficult
- the most exciting

# Two-syllable adjectives



Some use -er / -est. Others use more / most. Learn common examples.

## -y endings

easy → easier → the easiest
funny → funnier → the funniest

## many other adjectives

careful → more careful → the most careful
useful → more useful → the most useful

**Sometimes both forms are possible: quieter / more quiet. Use the form that sounds natural to you.**

# Irregular forms

These words change completely. Learn them as a group.

| adjective | comparative | superlative |
|---|---|---|
| good | better | the best |
| bad | worse | the worst |
| far | farther / further | the farthest / furthest |
| many / much | more | the most |
| little | less | the least |

# Less and the least



Use these when something has a smaller amount or degree.

**This phone is less expensive than mine.**

**I have less free time today.**

**It is the least expensive option.**

**Monday is the least busy day.**

**Use fewer with countable plural nouns:**
**There are fewer cars on this road.**

# Making comparisons stronger or softer



Add these words before a comparative adjective.

**much / a lot**
**much colder**

**a little**
**a little cheaper**

**a bit**
**a bit smaller**

**NOT: very colder**
**Use: much colder / a lot colder**

Question: Is Madrid much bigger than your home town?

# Speaking practice: compare your life



Ask and answer in full sentences. Ask one follow-up question after each answer.

1. Is your home bigger or smaller than your last home?

2. Which is more useful: a laptop or a tablet? Why?

3. Is this week busier than last week?

4. What is the best place to relax in your city?

5. Which is more difficult for you: listening or speaking?

Useful follow-up: Why do you think so?

# Written practice: choose the form



Work alone first. Then compare answers with a partner.

**Complete each sentence with the correct comparative or superlative form.**

1. My new job is _____ (busy) than my old job.
2. This is the _____ (cheap) restaurant in the area.
3. Winter is _____ (cold) than autumn here.
4. The blue bag is _____ (expensive) than the black one.
5. Sarah is the _____ (good) player on the team.

**Answers: busier · cheapest · colder · more expensive · best**

Speaking tip: say the whole sentence, not only the missing word.

# Written practice: transform the sentence



Work alone first. Then compare answers with a partner.

**Use the word in brackets. Keep the meaning the same.**

1. The red car costs €18,000. The black car costs €24,000. (cheap)
2. No building in this town is taller than the hotel. (tall)
3. Anna has 20 photos. Leo has 8 photos. (many)
4. My suitcase weighs 12 kg. Your suitcase weighs 18 kg. (heavy)
5. No route is more direct than this one. (direct)

**Possible answers: The red car is cheaper than the black car. · The hotel is the tallest building…**

Speaking tip: say the whole sentence, not only the missing word.

# Written practice: correct the mistakes



Work alone first. Then compare answers with a partner.

**Some sentences are correct. Write “correct” when you do not need to change anything.**

1. This exercise is more easier than the last one.
2. The Nile is the longest river in Africa.
3. My bedroom is the more comfortable room in the flat.
4. Friday is busier than Thursday.
5. This hotel is expensiver than that hotel.

**Answers: easier · correct · the most comfortable · correct · more expensive**

Speaking tip: say the whole sentence, not only the missing word.

# Speak and explain your choice



Choose A or B. Give one reason using a comparative or superlative.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **A travel by train** | **B travel by plane** | **Why?** |
| **A cook at home** | **B eat at a restaurant** | **Why?** |
| **A live in a city** | **B live in a small town** | **Why?** |
| **A watch a series** | **B watch a film** | **Why?** |

Model: I prefer travelling by train because it is more comfortable than flying.

# Information gap: City break choices

Use the table to make at least six true sentences. Then ask your partner a question.

| City | Hotel / night | Museum tickets | Travel time |
|---|---|---|---|
| Valencia | €95 | €12 | 1 h 50 |
| Seville | €82 | €9 | 2 h 40 |
| Bilbao | €110 | €14 | 1 h 10 |

**Example: Seville is cheaper than Bilbao. Bilbao is the most expensive option.**
**Question: Which city is the quickest to reach?**

# Writing practice: recommend a place

Write 70–90 words for a friend who is choosing between two places to visit.

Include:

- at least 3 comparatives
- at least 2 superlatives
- one reason for your choice
- than, the, in / of

Useful language

X is cheaper / quieter / more exciting than Y.
X has better food than Y.
It is the best place for...
It is the most interesting option.

**Check: comparative + than | the + superlative | spelling**

# Quick recap

Short adjective: smaller / the smallest
Long adjective: more useful / the most useful
Irregular: better / the best
Negative comparison: less / the least
Comparative: use than
Superlative: use the + in / of

**Final challenge: Make one sentence about your life using each form.**