

Adjectives: Comparative and Superlative

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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 wise | larger wiser | largest 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 thin fat | bigger thinner fatter | biggest thinnest 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 |
| tender | tenderer | tenderest |

- 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 | further | 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 |
| 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**.

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