

Comparatives and Superlatives – Los adjetivos comparativos y superlativos

Comparatives:

Usamos los adjetivos en grado comparativo cuando queremos comparar dos cosas o dos personas. Al compararlas, decimos que una de ellas destaca sobre la otra. Decimos que algo o alguien es “más..... que”. Lo más importante para formar adjetivos comparativos es ver si el adjetivo es largo o corto. Más adelante veremos unas reglas para ver esto más claro, pero ahora veremos las reglas básicas.

Adjetivo	Comparativos
Corto Old	adj+er than older than
Largo Difficult	more adj than more difficult than

Consideramos adjetivos cortos a aquellos de una sílaba y a la mayoría de los de dos sílabas(aunque hay excepciones) o que terminen en “y”. A los cortos les añadimos “er” al final del adjetivo, y luego ponemos la partícula “than”.

Consideramos adjetivos largos a aquellos que tienen dos sílabas o más. Aquí no añadimos “er”, sino que escribimos “more” delante del adjetivo (al que no le hacemos nada), y luego también le añadimos “than” al final.

Es lógico que tengas dudas en los adjetivos de dos sílabas, pero no te preocupes, luego podrás ver unas reglas que te ayudaran a estudiar esos adjetivos.

Ejemplos de adjetivos comparativos:

Mary is Peter. (old)
 The green chair isthe blue chair. (comfortable)
 My hair is yours. (long)
 Biology is English. (difficult)

Reglas ortográficas generales:

Acabado en “e” muda. Sólo se añade “r”.	Nice	Nicer
De una sílaba, acabados en vocal+consonante. Se dobla la consonante + er.	Thin Big	Thinner Bigger
De dos sílabas, acabados en consonante+y. Cambiamos la “y” por “i”+er	Healthy Crazy	Healthier Crazier
Acabados en “l”. Se dobla la “l”+er	Cruel	Crueller

Superlatives:

Usamos los adjetivos en grado superlativo cuando queremos comparar más de dos cosas o dos personas. Al compararlas, decimos que una de ellas destaca sobre todas las demás. Decimos que algo o alguien es “lo más, la más, el más...”. Lo más importante para formar adjetivos comparativos es ver si el adjetivo es largo o corto. Más adelante veremos unas reglas para ver esto más claro, pero ahora veremos las reglas básicas.

Adjetivo	Superlativos
Corto Small	the adj+est the smallest
Largo Expensive	the most adj the most expensive

Consideramos adjetivos cortos a aquellos de una sílaba y a la mayoría de los de dos sílabas(aunque hay excepciones) o que terminen en “y”. A los cortos les añadimos “est” al final del adjetivo, y ponemos el artículo “the” delante del adjetivo.

Consideramos adjetivos largos a aquellos que tienen dos sílabas o más. Aquí no añadimos “est”, sino que escribimos “most” delante del adjetivo (al que no le hacemos nada), y también le añadimos el artículo “the” al principio (delante de “most”).

Es lógico que tengas dudas en los adjetivos de dos sílabas, pero no te preocupes, luego podrás ver unas reglas que te ayudaran a estudiar esos adjetivos.

Ejemplos de adjetivos superlativos:

Mary isof the class (old)
The green chair isof all the chairs. (comfortable)
My hair isof my family.(long)
Biology is subject in school. (difficult)

Adjetivos irregulares:

Hay algunos adjetivos que no siguen las reglas de adjetivos largos o cortos. Estos adjetivos no siguen ninguna regla y hay que aprendérselos de memoria.

Ahora vamos a ver un esquema de todo lo dicho:

Adjetivo	Comparativos	Superlativos
Corto Small	adj+er than smaller than	the adj+est the smallest
Largo Expensive	more adj than more expensive than	the most adj the most expensive
Irregulares Good Bad Little	better than worse than less than	the best the worst the least

REGLAS ORTOGRÁFICAS DE LOS ADJETIVOS COMPARATIVOS Y SUPERLATIVOS.

Aquí están las reglas principales para estos adjetivos. Estúdiatelas bien porque no sólo las verás este curso, sino que volverás a verlas más veces. Cuando antes te las aprendas, este tema te resultará facilísimo. ¡¡Animo!! Verás que es muy sencillo.

1. Adjetivos monosílabos.

Aplicamos la regla de añadir “er” a los comparativos y “est” a los superlativos.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
Old	Older than	The oldest
Small	Smaller than	The smallest
Tall	Taller than	The tallest

2. Adjetivos con más de tres sílabas.

Aplicamos la regla de añadir “more” delante del adjetivo en los comparativos, y “most” a los superlativos.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
Interesting	More interesting than	The most interesting
Important	More important than	The most important
Difficult	More difficult than	The most difficult

3. Adjetivos bisílabos acabados en “ful” o “re”.

Aplicamos la regla de añadir “more” delante del adjetivo en los comparativos, y “most” a los superlativos.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
Beautiful	More beautiful than	The most beautiful
Pure	More pure than	The most pure
Peaceful	More peaceful than	The most peaceful

4. Adjetivos bisílabos acabados en “y”. Cambiamos la “y” por “i” y aplicamos la regla de añadir “er” a los comparativos y “est” a los superlativos.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
Happy	Happier than	The happiest
Pretty	Prettier than	The prettiest
Easy	Easier than	The easiest

5. Adjetivos bisílabos acabados en “e”. En los comparativos añadimos “r” y “st” a los superlativos.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
Large	Larger than	The largest

6. Adjetivos bisílabos acabados en “er”. Aplicamos la regla de añadir “er” a los comparativos y “est” a los superlativos.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
Clever	Cleverer than	The cleverest

7. Adjetivos monosílabos acabados en vocal y consonante. Doblamos la última consonante y aplicamos la regla de “er” y “est”.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
Hot	Hotter than	The hottest
Big	Bigger than	The biggest

8. Adjetivos irregulares. No siguen ninguna regla y tienes que aprendértelos de memoria.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
Good	Better than	The best
Bad	Worse than	The worst
Little	Less than	The least

Comparativos de igualdad

Al comparar dos cosas o personas podemos decir que una de ellas es “más” o “menos” que la otra. Pero hay veces en las que queremos que ambas cosas son iguales. Para esto utilizamos los comparativos de igualdad.

Yo puedo decir:

Mi pelo es más largo que el tuyo.

My hair is longer than yours.

O puedo decir:

Mi pelo es tan largo como el tuyo.

My hair is as long as yours.

Cuando utilizamos comparativos de igualdad, no tenemos que distinguir entre adjetivos largos y cortos. Además, no hace falta hacerle nada a los adjetivos. Lo único que hay que hacer es poner “as” delante y detrás del adjetivo. Pero esto es sólo para comparativos de igualdad.

La fórmula sería: “as adj as”

Ejemplos de adjetivos comparativos de igualdad:

Mary is Peter. (old)

The green chair isthe blue chair. (comfortable)

My hair is yours. (long)

Biology is English. (difficult)

Usos de “too” y “enough”

Utilizamos estas dos expresiones para hablar de una característica determinada de un adjetivo en concreto. Lo importante es saber su significado y donde se colocan. No los usamos para comparar, sino para dar mayor información referida a un adjetivo.

“Too” – Lo ponemos delante de un adjetivo, con ello queremos decir que hay un exceso de algo, es decir **demasiado**.

Today is hot. – Hoy hace calor.

Today is too hot. – Hoy hace demasiado calor.

This exam is difficult. – Este examen es difícil.

This exam is too difficult. – Este examen es demasiado difícil.

“Enough” – Lo ponemos detrás de un adjetivo, y con ello queremos decir que algo es suficiente, y lo traducimos por **suficientemente**. Si utilizamos la forma negativa de enough (not + adj + enough), queremos decir que algo es insuficiente, y lo traducimos por **no lo bastante** o por **no suficientemente**.

This car is cheap. – Este coche es barato.

This car is cheap enough. – Este coche es suficientemente barato.

This car isn't cheap. – Este coche no es barato.

This car isn't cheap enough. - Este coche no es lo suficientemente barato.

Adjectives: comparative and superlative

1. Complete the chart with the **comparatives** and **superlatives**:

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
long	longer than	the longest
fast	faster than	
pretty		the prettiest
beautiful	more beautiful than	
ugly	uglier than	
thin		the thinnest
fashionable	more fashionable than	

2. Write the **comparative**:

- a. old
- b. strong
- c. happy
- d. modern.....
- e. important.....
- f. good.....
- g. large
- h. serious
- i. pretty
- j. bad

3. Complete the sentences with a **superlative**:

- a. This building is very old. It's the oldest building in the town.
- b. It was a very happy day. It was.....of my life.
- c. It's a very good film. It'sI've seen.
- d. It was a very bad mistake. It was..... in my life.
- e. It was a very cold day. It wasof the year.
- f. She's a popular singer. She'sin the country.
- g. He's a very boring person. He'sI know.
- h. This house is very big. It isI've lived in.
- i. My cousin is very tall. He isI have.
- j. Laura is a very pretty girl. She isI know.

4. Choose the correct answer:

- a. Tom's car is **as big as** / **the biggest** his friend's.
- b. Who is **shorter than** / **the shortest** person in your family?
- c. Who is **more independent than** / **the most independent** person you know?
- d. These sofas are **more comfortable than** / **the most comfortable** ours.
- e. My brother is **taller than** / **the tallest** in the class.
- f. Is Jason's dog **older than** / **the oldest** yours?
- g. Who is **the best** / **better than** singer in the world?
- h. We are **younger than** / **the youngest** the rest of the class.
- i. My hair is **the straightest** / **straighter than** your hair.
- j. He is **more popular** / **the most popular** singer in the world.

5. Write the sentences in the correct order:

a. taller / than / Gary / Rick / is.
Gary is taller than Rick.

b. trousers / John / got / has / new / light.
.....

c. Mary / clothes / likes / bigger
.....

d. an / expensive / Rick / wearing / coat / is
.....

e. the / Carol / has / scarf / got / shortest
.....

f. the / student / he / tallest / is
.....

g. actress / Mary / the / was / popular / most
.....

h. He / the / was / footballer / best
.....

i. plays / than / better / you / Mary
.....

6. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the adjective in brackets:

- a. Carol is as good (good) as you at sport.
- b. We like wearing the _____ (late) fashion.
- c. These trousers are _____ (comfortable) than those jeans.
- d. She is _____ (happy) now than he was last year.
- e. You are the _____ (pretty) girl in class.
- f. My grandma is _____ (old) than my grandpa.
- g. The red dress is the _____ (attractive) in the shop.
- h. I always tell the _____ (fun) jokes.
- i. Your hair is _____ (curly) than my hair.
- j. My hair is _____ (short) than yours.

7. Underline the superlative form of the adjectives.

- a. The elephant is bigger / the biggest animal.
- b. My birthday is the happiest / happier day in the year.
- c. Maths is more difficult / the most difficult subject in school.
- d. Football is the funniest / funnier sport.
- e. Australia is smaller / the smallest continent.

8. Choose the correct form of the adjectives.

- a. Basketball is more popular / the most popular than horse-riding.
- b. Amy is shorter / the shortest girl in my class.
- c. Surfing is more dangerous / the most dangerous than tennis.
- d. Science is more interesting / the most interesting subject at school.
- e. Santiago Segura is fatter / the fattest than Tom Cruise.

Comparative Adjectives

We often want to look at people or things together so that we can see how they are different.

When we do this, we are *comparing* things. To compare two things, we use a comparative adjective e.g. **colder**.



This is a photo of my two collie dogs.
This is Lassie on the left and Lady, the taller one, is on the right.
Lassie is 4 years old and Lady is older than Lassie.
She's 11.

Exercise 1:

i. Answer these questions:

- Who is taller, Lassie or Lady?
- Who is older, Lassie or Lady?

Short adjectives (e.g. *fat, tall*) take **-er**. *tall* → *taller*.

Here is a list of some short adjectives (adjectives that have one syllable) that take **-er**.

<i>tall</i>	<i>big*</i>	<i>cold</i>	<i>cheap</i>	<i>old</i>	<i>large**</i>
<i>rare</i>	<i>rich</i>	<i>poor</i>	<i>young</i>	<i>fat*</i>	

* Some consonants are doubled. *big* → *bigger*, *fat* → *fatter*

** e is not doubled. *larger* → *larger*.

Exercise 2:

Make these adjectives into comparative adjectives:

rare rich old
large poor wet

Longer adjectives (adjectives that have three or more syllables) (e.g. *expensive, comfortable*) take **more**.

Here is a list of some longer adjectives (adjectives that have three or more syllables) that take **more**.

<i>expensive</i>	<i>comfortable</i>	<i>dangerous</i>	<i>frightening</i>
<i>beautiful</i>	<i>powerful</i>	<i>fashionable</i>	

Most adjectives with two syllables take **more** e.g. *more careful, more hopeful* but some two-syllable adjectives do not.

Here are some two-syllable adjectives that take **more**.

upset *modern* *boring*

Here are two-syllable adjectives that take **-er**.

narrow simple* e is not doubled. *simple* → *simpler*

Most adjectives ending in **y** have two syllables and end in **-ier**

e.g. *happy* → *happier*, *funny* → *funnier*

Adjectives ending in **ly** take **-ier** e.g. *lovely* → *lovelier*.

We use a comparative **adjective + than** to say **that something is more X**.

We use **not + as and an adjective** to say **something isn't as X as something**.

Look at this example.

Burj Dubai* will have a height of 808 meters.

*This building won't be finished until 2009.

It will be taller than the Taipei 101 in Taipei and the CN Tower in Toronto.

The CN Tower Toronto is taller than the Sears Tower and the Taipei 101.

The Sears Tower is not as tall as the CN Tower Toronto.

The Sears Tower isn't as new as the Taipei 101.



A few adjectives are irregular (they do not follow the same rules as other adjectives for comparative or superlative forms.)

good → better, bad → worse

Exercise 3:

Make these adjectives into a comparative adjective. (They are short adjectives or two-syllable adjectives that take **-er**.)

Hint: be very careful with 6.!

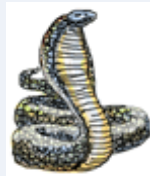
1. An apple is (cheap) than a hamburger.
2. An apple is (healthy) than a burger.
3. An apple is (heavy) than a burger.
4. Many people think a burger is (tasty) than an apple.
5. Parents are (happy) when their children eat apples.
6. Apples are (good) for you than hamburgers.



Exercise 4:

Make each adjective in the brackets into a comparative adjective using more. These are all long adjectives.

1. A cobra is (dangerous) than a mouse.
2. A cobra is (difficult) to keep than a mouse.
3. A hippo is (powerful) than a cobra.
4. A hippo is (frightening) than a mouse.
5. A hippo is (expensive) than a cobra.



Superlative Adjectives

Sometimes we want to say that something is **the most**. When we do this, we use a superlative adjective e.g. **the coldest**.

Look at this example:

This is a photo of my grandchildren.

William is the oldest. He's 10.

Emily is 6 and Zoe is my youngest grandchild - she's 2.

I think Emily is the smartest - she loves telling stories and singing songs.

Zoe is the naughtiest - she is the youngest and everyone is very kind to her.

William is the funniest - he always makes me laugh.

I love them very much and I think they are the most wonderful children in the world!



Exercise 5:

Answer these questions:

1. Who is the oldest grandchild?
2. Who is the youngest grandchild?
3. Who is the smartest grandchild?
4. Who is the naughtiest grandchild?
5. Who is the funniest grandchild?
6. Who are the most wonderful children in the world?

Short adjectives (e.g. *fat*, *tall*) take **the -est**. *tall* → *the tallest*.

Here is a list of short adjectives (adjectives that have one syllable) that take the **-est**.

tall	big*	cold	old	large**
rare	rich	poor	young	fat* wet

* Some consonants are doubled. *big* → *the biggest*, *fat* → *the fattest*. ** e is not doubled. *larger* → *the largest*.

Exercise 6:

Make these adjectives into superlative adjectives:

rare , rich , old ,
large , poor , wet

Long adjectives (adjectives that have three or more syllables) (e.g. *expensive*, *comfortable*) take **the most**.
expensive → *the most expensive*.

Here is a list of longer adjectives (adjectives that have three or more syllables) that take **the most**.

expensive *comfortable* *dangerous* *frightening*
beautiful *powerful* *fashionable*

Most adjectives with two syllables take **the most** e.g. *careful*, *hopeful* but some take **-est**.

Here are some two-syllable adjectives that take **the most**.

upset *modern* *boring*

Here are some two-syllable adjectives that take the **-est**.

narrow *naughty* *simple** *e is not doubled. *simple* → *simplest*

Most adjectives ending in **y** have two syllables, and they end in **the -iest** e.g. *happy* → *the happiest*, *funny* → *the funniest*.

Adjectives ending **-ly** take the **-iest**. e.g. *lovely* → *the loveliest*.

Superlative forms of irregular adjectives

good → *best* *bad* → *worst*

Exercise 7:

Make each adjective in the brackets into a superlative adjective.

This is a photo of some of my shoes.

I love shoes.

I love the pink ones with the bows - they are the shoes (cheap) I have but they are very comfortable - maybe the (comfortable) shoes I have.

The blue shoes are (fashionable) shoes I have.

I always feel I am the (beautiful) woman in the room when I wear them!

I wear the black shoes at work when I want people to think that I have the (good) ideas.



Answer Key:

Exercise 1:

1. Lady, 2. Lady

Exercise 2:

i rarer, richer, older, larger, poorer, wetter.

Exercise 3:

1. cheaper, 2. healthier, 3. heavier, 4. tastier, 5. happier, 6. better.

Exercise 4:

1. more dangerous, 2. more difficult, 3. more powerful, 4. more frightening, 5. more expensive.

Exercise 5:

1. William, 2. Zoe, 3. Emily, 4. Zoe, 5. William, 6. her grandchildren (Emily, Zoe and William).

Exercise 6:

rarest, richest, oldest, largest, poorest, wettest.

Exercise 7:

cheapest, most comfortable, most fashionable, most beautiful, best.

Comparative Adjectives

To compare two things, we use a comparative adjective e.g. **tall** ➔ **taller**.



Here's a photo of three giraffes.

The tallest giraffe is Stevie. Spotty and Allie are shorter than Stevie and Allie is shorter than Spotty.

Exercise 1:

Answer these questions.

Which giraffe is a?

Which giraffe is b?

Which giraffe is c?

Short adjectives (e.g. *fat, tall*) take **-er**. *tall* ➔ *taller*.

Here is a list of some short adjectives (adjectives that have one syllable) that take **-er**.

<i>tall</i>	<i>big*</i>	<i>cold</i>	<i>cheap</i>	<i>old</i>	<i>large**</i>
<i>rare</i>	<i>rich</i>	<i>poor</i>	<i>young</i>	<i>fat*</i>	

* Some consonants are doubled. *big* ➔ *bigger*, *fat* ➔ *fatter*

** e is not doubled. *large* ➔ *larger*.

Longer adjectives (adjectives that have three or more syllables) (e.g. *expensive, comfortable*) take **more**.

Here is a list of some longer adjectives (adjectives that have three or more syllables) that take **more**.

<i>expensive</i>	<i>comfortable</i>	<i>dangerous</i>	<i>frightening</i>
<i>beautiful</i>	<i>powerful</i>	<i>fashionable</i>	

Most adjectives with two syllables take **more** e.g. *more careful, more hopeful* but some two-syllable adjectives do not.

Here are some two-syllable adjectives that take **more**.

<i>upset</i>	<i>modern</i>	<i>boring</i>	<i>famous</i>
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Here are two-syllable adjectives that take **-er**. *narrow, simple** e is not doubled. *simple* ➔ *simpler*

Most adjectives ending in **y** have two syllables and end in **-ier** e.g. *happy* ➔ *happier*, *funny* ➔ *funnier*

Adjectives ending in **ly** take **-ier** e.g. *silly* ➔ *sillier*.

We use a comparative **adjective + than** to say **that something is more X**. *Spotty is taller than Allie*.

We use **not + as and an adjective** to say **something isn't as X as something**. *Allie is not as tall as Spotty*.

A few adjectives are irregular (they do not follow the same rules as other adjectives for comparative or superlative forms.)

good ➔ *better*, *bad* ➔ *worse*

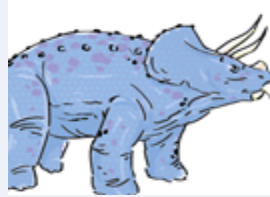
Exercise 2:

Make these adjectives into a comparative adjective.

1. A T. Rex dinosaur was probably (fierce) than a triceratops dinosaur.

2. A brontosaurus was (tall) than a T.Rex dinosaur.

3. A triceratops was probably (good) at defending itself than a brontosaurus.



Exercise 2:

Make each adjective in the brackets into a comparative adjective.

- The Alsatian dog is (intelligent) than a spaniel.
- The poodle is (fluffy) than the other two dogs.
- The Alsatian is (powerful) than most other dogs.
- The spaniel is (popular) with families than most other dogs.
- The Alsatian is (fast) than other dogs.



Superlative Adjectives

Sometimes we want to say that something is **the most**. When we do this, we use a superlative adjective e.g. **the coldest**.

Exercise 3:

Answer these questions about the fruit:

- Which fruit in group 1 do you think is the most expensive to buy?
- Which fruit in group 1 do you think is the juiciest?
- Which fruit in group 2 do you think is the sourest?
- Which fruit in group 2 do you think is the healthiest?
- Which fruit in group 3 do you think is the most useful?
- Which fruit in group 3 do you think grows in the coldest places?



Short adjectives (e.g. *fat*, *tall*) take **the -est**. *tall* → *the tallest*.

Here is a list of short adjectives (adjectives that have one syllable) that take the **-est**.

tall big cold old large** rare rich poor young fat* wet*

* Some consonants are doubled. *big* → *the biggest*, *fat* → *the fattest*. ** e is not doubled. *large* → *the largest*.

Long adjectives (adjectives that have three or more syllables) (e.g. *expensive*, *comfortable*) take **the most**.
expensive → *the most expensive*.

Here is a list of longer adjectives (adjectives that have three or more syllables) that take **the most**.
expensive comfortable dangerous frightening beautiful powerful fashionable

Most adjectives with two syllables take **the most** e.g. *careful*, *hopeful* but some take **-est**.

Here are some two-syllable adjectives that take **the most**.

upset modern boring

Here are some two-syllable adjectives that take the **-est**.

*narrow naughty simple** *e is not doubled. *simple* → *simplest*

Most adjectives ending in **y** have two syllables, and they end in **the -iest** e.g. *happy* → *the happiest*, *funny* → *the funniest*.

Adjectives ending **-ly** take the **-iest**. e.g. *lovely* → *the loveliest*.

Superlative forms of irregular adjectives: *good* → *best* *bad* → *worst*

Exercise 4:

Make each adjective in the brackets into a superlative adjective.



These are my three good friends, Suzy, Jana and Kate.

Suzy is the clever one. My math teacher thinks she is the 1. (brainless) student in the class and she's always winning prizes. She usually asks the 2. (intelligent) questions.

Jana is the 3. (dreamy) of my friends. She is often thinking about other things and she writes the 4. (lovely) stories and poems.

Kate is the 5. (cheerful) in my group. She tells the 6. (funny) jokes and says the 7. (silly) things. She sends me the 8. (crazy) text messages.

Answer Key:

Exercise 1: a. Allie, b. Spotty, C. Stevie. Exercise 2: 1. fiercer, 2. taller, 3. better, 4. more intelligent, 5. fluffier, 6. more powerful, 7. more popular, 8. faster.

Exercise 3: Answers will vary. Exercise 4: 1. brainiest, 2. most intelligent, 3. dreamiest, 4. loveliest, 5. most cheerful, 6. funniest, 7. silliest, 8. craziest.

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