

Comparative adjectives

Introduction



Sam is **taller than** his sister.

Definition and use

We use comparative adjectives of superiority, inferiority and equality to compare two things or people.

Construction

Superiority

One-syllable	adjective + 'er' + 'than' colder than	Sweden is colder than France.
Two-syllables and ending in a consonant and 'y'	adjective + change 'y' to 'i' + 'er' + 'than' busier than	I'm busier than my boss.
Others with two syllables*	'more' + adjective + 'than' more honest than	Alain is more honest than Patricia.

More than two syllables	'more' + adjective + 'than' more expensive than	Cars are more expensive than motorbikes.
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*Note that there are exceptions including some adjectives ending in 'er', 'le' and 'ow'.

For example:

This exercise is **simpler** than that one.
The roads here are **narrower** than the roads in the city.
My new office is **quieter** than my old one.

Inferiority

One-syllable	'not as' + adjective + 'as'	France isn't as cold as Sweden.
More than one syllable	1. 'not as' + adjective + 'as' 2. 'less' + adjective + 'than'	My boss isn't as busy as me. Alain isn't as honest as Patricia. Motorbikes aren't as expensive as cars. My boss is less busy than me. Alain is less honest than Patricia. Motorbikes are less expensive than cars.

Note that

1. 'not...as...as...' is more common in conversation than 'less...than...' for both long and short adjectives.
2. It is possible to give information in more than one way. For example, the following groups of sentences have the same meaning:

France is n't as cold as Sweden.	Motorbikes are n't as expensive as cars.
France is warmer than Sweden.	Motorbikes are less expensive than cars.
Sweden is colder than France.	Cars are more expensive than motorbikes.
Sweden is n't as warm as France.	Motorbikes are cheaper than cars.

Equality

All adjectives	'as' + adjective + 'as' as cold as as busy as as honest as as expensive as	January is as cold as February. I'm as busy as my boss. She's as honest as him. The bus is as expensive as the train.
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Spelling rules when adding 'er'

One vowel and one consonant - double and add 'er'	More than one vowel or consonant - add 'er'	Ends in 'e' - add 'r'	Change 'y' to 'i' and add 'er'
big ->bigger thin -> thinner wet -> wetter	steep -> steeper rich -> richer near -> nearer	nice -> nicer wide ->wider close -> closer	dry -> drier pretty -> prettier happy -> happier

Pronouns

We can use either subject pronoun + verb or object pronoun. For example:

Alain is more honest than Patricia.

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He's more honest than she is.

or

He's more honest than her.

Examples



Simon is younger than Todd.



Janette's present is bigger than Holly's.



This box is smaller and heavier than the blue box.



Quality is more important than price.



The weather today is better than yesterday.



Your English is worse than your maths.



Jenny is less polite than her brother and sister.



The red apples are less expensive than the green.



Come and see me this afternoon - I'm not as busy as usual today.



This is great - it's as warm as a swimming pool.



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