Comparative and superlatives adverbs

1/5

Introduction



I eat more healthily now than when I was young.



He eats the most unhealthily of all his family.

Definition and use

We use comparative adverbs to compare two activities/actions or to show change. We can use comparative structures with adverbs of manner and some adverbs of time and frequency.

We use superlative adverbs to compare more than two activities or actions.

Construction

Comparative adverbs: Adverbs ending in 'ly'

Superiority

Inferiority

Equality

'more' + adverb + 'than'	1. 'less' + adverb + 'than'	'as' + adverb + 'as'
She works more quietly than him.	He works less quietly than her.	She works as quietly as him.
	2. 'not as' + adverb + 'as'	
	He doesn't work as quietly as her.	

Note that

- **1.** The second form for inferiority is more common in conversation.
- 2. It isn't always necessary to include 'than' and the second part of the sentence. For example:

It started to rain more heavily.

She's working less efficiently now.

Adverbs with the same form as the adjective

Superiority	Inferiority	Equality
adverb + 'er' + 'than'	'not as' + adverb + 'as'	'as' + adverb + 'as'
She works faster than him.	She does <mark>n't</mark> work <mark>as</mark> fast as he does.	She works <mark>as</mark> fast <mark>as</mark> he does.
She works hard <mark>er</mark> than him.	She doesn't work as hard as him.	She works as hard as him.
She arrived earlier than him.	She didn't arrive as early as him.	She arrived as early as him.

Irregular comparative adverbs

Superiority

Inferiority

Equality

adverb + 'than'	'not as' + adverb + 'as'	'as' + adverb + 'as'	
She speaks French better than he does.	He doesn't speak French as well as she does.	She speaks French as well as he does.	
He speaks French worse than she does.	She doesn't speak French as badly as he does.	She speaks French as badly as he does.	
He lives further from the station than her.	She does <mark>n't</mark> live as far from the station as him.	She lives as far from the station as him.	
She eats less than he does.	She doesn't eat <mark>as</mark> much as he does.	She eats asmuch as he does.	

Superlative adverbs

	Superiority	Inferiority
Adverbs ending in 'ly'	'the most' + adverb She works <mark>the most</mark> quietly.	'the least' + adverb She works <mark>the least</mark> quietly.
Adverbs with the same form as the adjective	'the' + adverb + 'est' She works the fastest. She arrived the earliest.	See note 2. below
Irregular comparative adverbs	'the' + adverb She speaks French the best. She speaks French the worst. He lives the furthest from the station.	See note 2. below

Note that

1. It is generally more common to use comparative adverbs than superlative ones. For example, we are more likely to say:

He behaved more professionally than the other delegates did. than He behaved the most professionally.

and She works less quietly than the others do./She doesn't work as quietly as the others do. than She works <mark>the least</mark> quietly.

2. With these adverbs, an alternative structure is preferred:

She works the least fast. X	She doesn't work as fast as her colleagues. She works more slowly than her colleagues
He speaks French the least well. 🗮	He doesn't speak French as well as the others.✓
He speaks French the least badly. 🗮	He doesn't speak French as badly as the others.✓
He lives the least far from the office. 🗮	He lives the nearest to the office. \checkmark
	He doesn't live as far from the office as the others. \checkmark

Examples



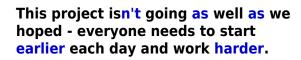
She's swimming more confidently now.



Unfortunately, some laptops work less efficiently than others do. Of all the computers I've owned, this one works the least efficiently.



We don't go cycling as often as before.





He doesn't drive as carefully as his wife.



He dresses as badly as he dances. Of everyone in the class, he dances the worst!



I'm sorry. We can't have the meeting as soon as we want to.



My children's behaviour is getting worse, not better!



Peter always deals with Katashi because he speaks Japanese the most confidently.



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