

# Comparatives and superlatives of superiority

## Introduction



Sam is **taller than** his sister.



The white egg is **the biggest** and the red egg is **the smallest**.

## Definition and use

We use comparative adjectives to compare two things or people.

We use superlative adjectives to compare more than two things or people.

## Construction

The construction usually depends on the number of syllables.

Comparatives:

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| One-syllable                                    | adjective + 'er' + 'than'<br><b>colder than</b>           | Sweden is <b>colder than</b> France.            |
| Two-syllables and ending in a consonant and 'y' | adjective + 'er' + 'than'<br><b>busier than</b>           | I'm <b>busier than</b> my boss.                 |
| More than two syllables                         | 'more' + adjective + 'than'<br><b>more expensive than</b> | Cars are <b>more expensive than</b> motorbikes. |

## Superlatives:

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| One-syllable                                    | 'the' + adjective + 'est'<br><b>the coldest</b>     | Antarctica is <b>the coldest</b> place in the world.   |
| Two-syllables and ending in a consonant and 'y' | 'the' + adjective + 'est'<br><b>the busiest</b>     | September is <b>the busiest</b> month for us.          |
| Others with two syllables                       | 'the most' + adjective<br><b>the most honest</b>    | She's <b>the most</b> honest person in the department. |
| More than two syllables                         | 'the most' + adjective<br><b>the most expensive</b> | This is <b>the most</b> expensive car in the world.    |

| One vowel and one consonant - double and add 'est'            | More than one vowel or consonant - add 'est'                     | Ends in 'e' - add 'st'                                       | Change 'y' to 'i' and add 'est'                                    |
|---|--|--|--|
| big - the biggest<br>thin - the thinnest<br>wet - the wettest | steep - the steepest<br>rich - the richest<br>near - the nearest | nice - the nicest<br>wide- the widest<br>close - the closest | dry - the driest<br>pretty - the prettiest<br>happy - the happiest |

Sometimes we use both in one sentence. For example:  
England is **bigger than** Belgium but France is **the biggest**.

| Adjective | Comparative adjective | Superlative adjective |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| big       | <b>bigger</b>         | <b>the biggest</b>    |
| cheap     | <b>cheaper</b>        | <b>the cheapest</b>   |
| pale      | <b>paler</b>          | <b>the palest</b>     |
| funny     | <b>funnier</b>        | <b>the funniest</b>   |
| good      | <b>better</b>         | <b>the best</b>       |
| bad       | <b>worse</b>          | <b>the worst</b>      |

## Irregular adjectives

good -> better

bad -> worse

far -> further

## Examples



Simon is younger **than** Todd.



Janette's present is **bigger than** Holly's.



This box is **smaller and heavier than** the blue box.



My apartment is **more modern than** my house.



Quality is **more important than** price.



The weather today is **better than** yesterday. We often have **the best** weather in September.



I have **the worst** office in the department!



They have four daughters. **The oldest** is nine and **the youngest** is one.



The pink flower is **the prettiest**.



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