

Comparative 1 (cheaper, more expensive etc.)

A Look at these examples:

How shall we travel? Shall we drive or go by train?

Let's drive. It's **cheaper**.

Don't go by train. It's **more expensive**.

Cheaper and **more expensive** are *comparative* forms.

After comparatives you can use **than** (see Unit 107):

- It's **cheaper** to drive **than** go by train.
- Going by train is **more expensive than** driving.



B The comparative form is **-er** or **more** ...

We use **-er** for short words (one syllable):

cheap → cheaper **fast** → faster
large → larger **thin** → thinner

We also use **-er** for two-syllable words that end in **-y** (**-y** → **-ier**):

lucky → luckier **early** → earlier
easy → easier **pretty** → prettier

For spelling, see Appendix 6.

We use **more** ... for longer words (two syllables or more):

more serious **more expensive**
more often **more comfortable**

We also use **more** ... for adverbs that end in **-ly**:

more slowly **more seriously**
more easily **more quietly**

Compare these examples:

- You're **older** than me.
- The exam was quite easy – **easier** than I expected.
- Can you walk a bit **faster**?
- I'd like to have a **bigger** car.
- Last night I went to bed **earlier** than usual.

- You're **more patient** than me.
- The exam was quite difficult – **more difficult** than I expected.
- Can you walk a bit **more slowly**?
- I'd like to have a **more reliable** car.
- I don't play tennis much these days. I used to play **more often**.

We use both **-er** or **more** ... with some two-syllable adjectives, especially:

clever **narrow** **quiet** **shallow** **simple**

- It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere **quieter**? or ... somewhere **more quiet**?

C A few adjectives and adverbs have irregular comparative forms:

good/well → **better**

- The garden looks **better** since you tidied it up.
- I know him well – probably **better** than anybody else knows him.

bad/badly → **worse**

- 'How's your headache? Better?' 'No, it's **worse**.'
- He did very badly in the exam – **worse** than expected.

far → **further** (or **farther**)

- It's a long walk from here to the park – **further** than I thought. (or **farther** than)

Note that **further** (*but not farther*) also means 'more' or 'additional':

- Let me know if you hear any **further** news. (= any more news)

Exercises

105.1 Complete the sentences using a comparative form (older / more important etc.).

- This restaurant is very expensive. Let's go somewhere cheaper.
- This coffee is very weak. I like it
- The town was surprisingly big. I expected it to be
- The hotel was surprisingly cheap. I expected it to be
- The weather is too cold here. I'd like to live somewhere
- Sometimes my job is a bit boring. I'd like to do something
- It's a shame you live so far away. I wish you lived
- It was quite easy to find a place to live. I thought it would be
- Your work isn't very good. I'm sure you can do
- Don't worry. The situation isn't so bad. It could be
- You hardly ever call me. Why don't you call me
- You're too near the camera. Can you move a bit away?

105.2 Complete the sentences. Use the comparative forms of the words in the box. Use **than where necessary.**

big early high important interested peaceful reliable serious slowly thin

- I was feeling tired last night, so I went to bed earlier than usual.
- I'd like to have a more reliable car. The one I have keeps breaking down.
- Unfortunately the problem was we thought at first.
- You look Have you lost weight?
- We don't have enough space here. We need a apartment.
- James doesn't study very hard. He's in having a good time.
- Health and happiness are money.
- I like living in the country. It's living in a town.
- I'm sorry I don't understand. Can you speak, please?
- In some parts of the country, prices are in others.

105.3 Complete the sentences. Choose from:

than more worse quietly longer better careful frequent

- Getting a visa was complicated. It took longer than I expected.
- Sorry about my mistake. I'll try and be more in future.
- Your English has improved. It's than it was.
- You can travel by bus or by train. The buses are more than the trains.
- You can't always have things immediately. You have to be patient.
- I'm a pessimist. I always think things are going to get
- We were busier usual in the office today. It's not usually so busy.
- You're talking very loudly. Can you speak more ?

105.4 Read the situations and complete the sentences. Use a comparative form (-er or more ...).

- Yesterday the temperature was six degrees. Today it's only three degrees.
It's colder today than it was yesterday.
- Dan and I went for a run. I ran ten kilometres. Dan stopped after eight kilometres.
I ran Dan.
- The journey takes four hours by car and five hours by train.
The journey takes train car.
- I expected my friends to arrive at about 4 o'clock. In fact they arrived at 2.30.
My friends I expected.
- There is always a lot of traffic here, but today the traffic is really bad.
The traffic today usual.

A much / a lot etc. + comparative

Before comparatives you can use:

much **a lot** **far** (= a lot) **a bit** **a little** **slightly** (= a little)

- I felt ill earlier, but I feel **much better** now. (or **a lot better**)
- Don't go by train. It's **a lot more expensive**. (or **much more expensive**)
- Could you speak **a bit more slowly**? (or **a little more slowly**)
- This bag is **slightly heavier** than the other one.
- The problem is **far more serious** than we thought at first.

B any / no + comparative

You can use **any** and **no** + comparative (**any longer** / **no bigger** etc.):

- I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting **any longer**. (= not even a little longer)
- We expected their apartment to be very big, but it's **no bigger** than ours.
or ... it **isn't any bigger** than ours. (= not even a little bigger)
- How do you feel now? Do you feel **any better**?
- This hotel is better than the other one, and it's **no more expensive**.

C better and better, more and more etc.

We repeat comparatives (**better and better** etc.) to say that something changes continuously:

- Your English is improving. It's getting **better and better**.
- The city has grown fast in recent years. It's got **bigger and bigger**.
- As I listened to his story, I became **more and more convinced** that he was lying.
- More and more tourists** are visiting this part of the country.

D the ... the ...

You can say **the sooner the better**, **the more the better** etc.:

- A: What time shall we leave?
B: **The sooner the better**. (= as soon as possible)
- A: What sort of bag do you want? A big one?
B: Yes, **the bigger the better**. (= as big as possible)
- When you're travelling, **the less luggage** you have **the better**.

We also use **the ... the ...** to say that one thing depends on another thing:

- The sooner** we leave, **the earlier** we'll arrive. (= if we leave sooner, we'll arrive earlier)
- The younger** you are, **the easier** it is to learn.
- The more expensive** the hotel, **the better** the service.
- The more** I thought about the plan, **the less** I liked it.

E older and elder

The comparative of **old** is **older**:

- David looks **older** than he really is. (not looks elder)

We use **elder** only when we talk about people in a family (**my elder sister**, **their elder son** etc.).

You can also use **older**:

- My elder sister** is a TV producer. (or My **older** sister ...)

But we do not say that 'somebody is elder':

- My sister is **older** than me. (not elder than me)

Exercises

106.1 Use the words in brackets to complete the sentences. Use **much / a bit** etc. + a comparative form. Use **than** where necessary.

- The problem is much more serious than we thought at first. (much / serious)
- This bag is too small. I need something (much / big)
- I liked the museum. It was I expected. (a lot / interesting)
- It was very hot yesterday. Today it's (a little / cool)
- I'm afraid the problem is it seems. (far / complicated)
- You're driving too fast. Can you drive? (a bit / slowly)
- I thought he was younger than me, but in fact he's (slightly / old)

106.2 Complete the sentences using **any/no** + comparative. Use **than** where necessary.

- I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting any longer
- I'm sorry I'm a bit late, but I couldn't get here
- This shop isn't expensive. The prices are anywhere else.
- I need to stop for a rest. I can't walk
- The traffic isn't especially bad today. It's usual.

106.3 Complete the sentences using **... and ...** (see Section C).

- It's getting more and more difficult to find a job. (difficult)
- That hole in your sweater is getting (big)
- I waited for my interview and became (nervous)
- As the day went on, the weather got (bad)
- Health care is becoming (expensive)
- Since Anna went to Canada, her English has got (good)
- These days I travel a lot. I'm spending away from home. (time)

106.4 Complete the sentences using **the ... the ...**.

- You learn things more easily when you're young.
The younger you are, the easier it is to learn.
- It's hard to concentrate when you're tired.
The more tired you are, the
- We should decide what to do as soon as possible.
The, the better.
- I know more, but I understand less.
The, the less I understand.
- If you use more electricity, your bill will be higher.
The more electricity you use,
- Kate had to wait a long time and became more and more impatient.
The, the more

106.5 Use the words on the right to complete the sentences.

- I like to travel light. The less luggage, the better.
- The problem is getting and more serious.
- The more time I have, the it takes me to do things.
- I'm walking as fast as I can. I can't walk faster.
- The higher your income, more tax you have to pay.
- I'm surprised Anna is only 25. I thought she was
- Jane's sister is a nurse.
- I was a little late. The journey took longer than I expected.
- Applications for the job must be received later than 15 April.
- Don't tell him anything. The he knows, the

any
better
elder
~~less~~
less
longer
more
no
older
slightly
the

Comparative 3 (as ... as / than)

A Study this example situation:



Sarah, Joe and David are all very rich. Sarah has \$20 million, Joe has \$15 million and David has \$10 million. So:

Joe is rich.

He is **richer than** David.

But he **isn't as rich as** Sarah.
(= Sarah is **richer than** he is)

Some more examples of **not as ... (as)**:

- Jack **isn't as old as** he looks. (= he looks **older than** he is)
- The town centre **wasn't as crowded as** usual. (= it is usually **more crowded**)
- Lisa **didn't do as well** in the exam **as** she had hoped. (= she had hoped to do **better**)
- The weather is better today. It's **not as cold**. (= yesterday was **colder than** today)
- I **don't know as many people as** you do. (= you know **more people than** me)
- 'How much was it? Fifty dollars?' 'No, **not as much** as that.' (= **less than** fifty dollars)

You can also say **not so ... (as)**:

- It's not warm, but it's **not so cold as** yesterday. (= it's not **as cold as** ...)

Less than is similar to **not as ... as**:

- I spent **less money than** you. (= I **didn't** spend **as much money as** you)
- The city centre was **less crowded than** usual. (= it **wasn't as** crowded **as** usual)
- I play tennis **less than** I used to. (= I **don't** play **as much as** I used to)

B We also use **as ... as** (*but not so ... as*) in positive sentences and in questions:

- I'm sorry I'm late. I got here **as fast as** I could.
- There's plenty of food. You can have **as much as** you want.
- Can you send me the information **as soon as** possible, please?
- Let's walk. It's just **as quick as** taking the bus.

also **twice as ... as, three times as ... as** etc.:

- Petrol is **twice as expensive as** it was a few years ago.
- Their house is about **three times as big as** ours.
(or ... **three times the size of** ours)

C We say **the same as** (*not the same like*):

- Laura's salary is **the same as** mine. or Laura gets **the same** salary **as** me.
- David is **the same** age **as** James.
- Sarah hasn't changed. She still looks **the same as** she did ten years ago.

D **than me / than I am** etc.

You can say:

- You're taller **than me**. or You're taller **than I am**.
(*not usually* You're taller than I)
- He's not as clever **as her**. or He's not as clever **as she is**.
- They have more money **than us**. or They have more money **than we have**.
- I can't run as fast **as him**. or I can't run as fast **as he can**.

Exercises

107.1 Complete the sentences using **as ... as**.

- I'm tall, but you are taller. I'm not as tall as you.
- My salary is high, but yours is higher. My salary isn't
- You know a bit about cars, but I know more.
You don't
- We are busy today, but we were busier yesterday.
We aren't
- I still feel bad, but I felt a lot worse earlier.
I don't
- Our neighbours have lived here for quite a long time, but we've lived here longer.
Our neighbours haven't
- I was a little nervous before the interview, but usually I'm a lot more nervous.
I wasn't

107.2 Write a new sentence with the same meaning.

- Jack is younger than he looks. Jack isn't as old as he looks.
- I didn't spend as much money as you. You spent more money than me.
- The station was nearer than I thought. The station wasn't
- The meal didn't cost as much as I expected. The meal cost
- I watch TV less than I used to. I don't
- Karen's hair isn't as long as it used to be. Karen used to
- I know them better than you do. You don't
- There are fewer students in this class than in the other one.
There aren't

107.3 Complete the sentences using **as ... as**. Choose from:

fast hard long often quietly soon well

- I'm sorry I'm late. I got here as fast as I could.
- It was a difficult question. I answered it I could.
- 'How long can I stay with you?' 'You can stay you like.'
- I need the information quickly, so let me know possible.
- I like to keep fit, so I go swimming I can.
- I didn't want to wake anybody, so I came in I could.
- You always say how tiring your job is, but I work just you.

107.4 Write sentences using **the same as**.

- David and James are both 22 years old. David is the same age as James.
- You and I both have dark brown hair. Your hair mine.
- I arrived at 10.25 and so did you. I arrived you.
- My birthday is 5 April. It's Tom's birthday too. My birthday Tom's.

107.5 Complete the sentences. Choose from:

as him is less me much soon than twice

- I'll let you know as soon as I have any more news.
- My friends arrived earlier I expected.
- I live in the same street Katherine. We're neighbours.
- He doesn't know much. I know more than
- This morning there was traffic than usual.
- I don't watch TV as as I used to.
- Your bag is quite light. Mine is as heavy as yours.
- We were born in the same year. I'm a little older than she
- I was really surprised. Nobody was more surprised than

A Look at these examples:

What is **the longest** river in the world?
 What was **the most enjoyable** holiday you've ever had?

Longest and **most enjoyable** are *superlative* forms.

The superlative form is **-est** or **most** In general, we use **-est** for short words and **most** . . . for longer words.

long → longest **hot** → hottest **easy** → easiest **hard** → hardest
but **most** famous **most** boring **most** enjoyable **most** difficult

A few superlative forms are irregular:

good → **best** bad → **worst** far → **furthest** or **farthest**

The rules are the same as those for the comparative – see Unit 105.
 For spelling, see Appendix 6.

B We normally use **the** (or **my/your** etc.) with a superlative:

- Yesterday was **the hottest** day of the year.
- The Louvre in Paris is one of **the most famous** museums in the world.
- She is really nice – one of **the nicest** people I know.
- What's **the best** movie you've ever seen, and what's **the worst**?
- How old is **your youngest** child?

Compare the superlative and the comparative:

- This hotel is **the cheapest** in town. (*superlative*)
 It's **cheaper** than all the others in town. (*comparative*)
- He's **the most patient** person I've ever met.
 He's much **more patient** than I am.

C **oldest** and **eldest**

The superlative of **old** is **oldest**:

- That church is **the oldest** building in the town. (*not* the eldest)

We use **eldest** only when we talk about people in a family (you can also use **oldest**):

- Their eldest son** is 13 years old. (*or* Their **oldest** son)
- Are you **the eldest** in your family? (*or* the **oldest**)

D After superlatives we normally use **in** with places:

- What's the longest river **in the world**? (*not* of the world)
- We had a nice room. It was one of the best **in the hotel**. (*not* of the hotel)

We also use **in** for organisations and groups of people (a class / a company etc.):

- Who is the youngest student **in the class**? (*not* of the class)

For a period of time (**day, year** etc.), we normally use **of**:

- Yesterday was the hottest day **of the year**.
- What was the happiest day **of your life**?

E We often use the *present perfect* (I **have done**) after a superlative (see also Unit 8A):

- What's **the most important** decision **you've ever made**?
- That was **the best** holiday **I've had** for a long time.

Exercises

108.1 Complete the sentences. Use the superlative forms (-est or most ...) of the words in the box.

bad cheap good honest popular short tall

- We didn't have much money, so we stayed at the cheapest hotel in the town.
- This building is 250 metres high, but it's not in the city.
- It was an awful day. It was day of my life.
- What is sport in your country?
- I like the morning. For me it's part of the day.
- Sarah always tells the truth. She's one of people I know.
- A straight line is distance between two points.

108.2 Complete the sentences. Use a superlative (-est or most ...) or a comparative (-er or more ...).

- We stayed at the cheapest hotel in the town. (cheap)
- Our hotel was cheaper than all the others in the town. (cheap)
- I wasn't feeling well yesterday, but I feel a bit today. (good)
- What's thing you've ever bought? (expensive)
- I prefer this chair to the other one. It's (comfortable)
- Amy and Ben have three daughters. is 14 years old. (old)
- Who is the person you know? (old)
- What's way to get to the station? (quick)
- Which is - the bus or the train? (quick)
- I can remember when I was three years old. It's memory. (early)
- Everest is mountain in the world. It is than any other mountain. (high)
- A: This knife isn't very sharp. Do you have a one?
B: No, it's one I have. (sharp)

108.3 Complete the sentences. Use a superlative (-est or most ...) + a preposition (of or in).

- It's a very good room. It's the best room in the hotel.
- Brazil is a very large country. It's South America.
- It was a very happy day. It was my life.
- This is a very valuable painting. It's the museum.
- Spring is a very busy time for me. It's the year.

In the following sentences use **one of** + a superlative + a preposition.

- It's a very good room. It's one of the best rooms in the hotel.
- He's a very rich man. He's one the country.
- She's a very good student. She's the class.
- It was a very bad experience. It was my life.
- It's a very famous university. It's the world.

108.4 What do you say in these situations? Use a superlative + ever.

- You've just been to the cinema. The movie was extremely boring. You tell your friend: (boring / movie / ever / see) That's the most boring movie I've ever seen
- Someone has just told you a joke which you think is very funny. You say: (funny / joke / ever / hear) That's
- You're drinking coffee with a friend. It's really good coffee. You say: (good / coffee / ever / taste) This
- You have just run ten kilometres. You've never run further than this. You say: (far / ever / run) That
- You gave up your job. Now you think this was a very bad mistake. You say: (bad / mistake / ever / make) It
- Your friend meets a lot of people, some of them famous. You ask your friend: (famous / person / ever / meet?) Who?