

COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS AND OTHER WAYS TO COMPARE – A2

Main theme addressed	In this lesson, you will learn how to compare two things. You can compare things by using either comparative adjectives, adverbs, and other tools.
Key Goals	Here is an outline of what you will learn today: 1. How to use comparative adjectives 2. How to compare with adverbs 3. Other ways to express comparison

1. How to use comparative adjectives

1. Definition

We use comparative adjectives to compare two things.

If you compare two things in the same sentence, use the comparative form of the adjective followed by the word “**than**”.

Example:

Your friend Emma is 1.62 tall, and your friend James is 1.57 tall.

You can compare the height of your friends in these two ways:

- Emma is **taller than** James.
- James is **shorter than** Emma.

2. How to build comparative adjectives

There are different ways to build comparative adjectives, depending on the number of syllables of the adjective.

There is also a short list of irregular adjectives that you must learn by heart.

- For **one-syllable words**, you **add** the suffix **-er** at the end of the word.

Example:

tall + **-er** = taller

I am **taller than** my little sister.

- For **one-syllable words** that **end in a vowel and a consonant**, **double the final consonant** and add the suffix **-er** at the end of the word.

Example:

big + **g** + **-er** = bigger

I like to read books with **bigger** characters.

- For words that **end in a consonant followed by a -y**, **replace “-y” by “-ier”**.

Example:

easy **-y** + **-ier** = easier

Some people find it **easier** to speak than to write in English.

- For words with **3 or more syllables**, add the word **“more”** before the adjective.

Example:

“Popular” is made of 3 syllables. Therefore, you must add the word “more” before it to build its comparative form.

Entrepreneurship is **more popular** now among young people than it was 20 years ago.

There are adjectives that have irregular comparatives. Here are the 3 you need to learn.

Adjective	Irregular comparative
Good	Better
Bad	Worse
Far	Farther / Further

Exercise:

The following table shows adjectives in the left column, and their comparative form in the right column.

Fill any holes with either the adjectives or their comparative form depending on the column.

	Adjective	Comparative form
1.	easy	
2.	difficult	
3.		happier
4.	far	
5.		busier
6.	thin	
7.		hotter
8.	fast	
9.		newer
10.	interesting	

Answers:

1. easier
2. more difficult
3. happy
4. farther / further
5. busy
6. thinner
7. hot
8. faster
9. new
10. more interesting

2. How to compare with adverbs

Let us start this part with a reminder of the difference between adjectives and adverbs.

- We use **adjectives** to describe **nouns**.
- We use **adverbs** to describe **verbs**.

It means that adverbs qualify how someone or something is doing something.

Examples:

You performed in a play and you were happy with your performance. You could say:
I did a good performance (where the adjective “good” describes the “performance”).
I performed well (where the adverb “well” describes “performed”).

a) How to form comparative adverbs

There are 3 ways to use comparative adverbs:

- **More + adverb:**

For adverbs that are formed by adding the suffix -ly to the adjective, you form its comparative form by adding “more” before it.

My 5-year-old cousin is growing **more rapidly** than my little sister.

- **Adverb + er:**

For adverbs that have the same form as the adjective (such as hard, fast, straight, early, late, quick, etc), add the suffix -er.

My 5-year-old cousin is growing **faster** than my little sister.

- **Irregular adverbs:**

Here are the most common irregular adverbs and their comparative forms:

Adverb	Irregular comparative
Good, well	Better
Badly	Worse
Far	Farther / Further
Little	Less

Exercise:

Fill in the gaps in the following sentences with the comparative form of the adjective or the adverb.

Look at the words between parentheses.

Pay attention whether the word described is a noun or a verb: it will help you know whether to choose an adjective or an adverb.

1. I run (fast) _____ than my brother.
2. I am (good) _____ at martial arts compared to my classmates.
3. One of my classmates is (precise) _____ than our arts teacher when she draws animals.
4. I heard you often behave (quiet) _____ in the classes you prefer compared to the ones you do not like.
5. I fear that I will become (bad) _____ in English if I stop reviewing my lessons at home.
6. Sometimes I find it (efficient) _____ to play video games or watch TV shows in English to remember what I have learnt than to stick to the textbook.
7. But my father thinks I should study (serious) _____.

Answers:

1. faster (adverb)
2. better (adjective)
3. more precise (adjective)
4. more quietly (adverb)
5. worse (adjective)
6. more efficient (adjective)
7. more seriously (adverb)

3. Other ways to express comparison

a) As + adjective or adverb + as

Express similarity with “as + adjective or adverb + as”:

Example:

Thanks to Christmas, winter is **as fun as** summer.

She is **as happy as** a fish in the sea.

Express that things are different with “not as + adjective or adverb + as”!

Example:

Pastries made with oil are not **as tasty as** those made with butter.

You can add to the meaning of “as + adjective or adverb + as” by using the following words and expressions: just, almost, nearly, half, twice, three times, etc.

Examples:

She’s just **as healthy as** she was in her twenties.

John is **not nearly as strong as** Mark, but he has just started training after an injury.

Roger is really good at maths: he can solve problems **twice as fast as** the rest of the class!

You can compare nouns and express how they are similar with “**like**”, “**the same (as)**”, or “**similar to**”.

Example:

Her dress is **similar to** the bride’s.

Exercise:

Form the sentences by adding as and the adjective in bracket.

1. The blue car is _____ the red one. (fast)
2. This bread is _____ the other one (good)
3. Brown eggs are _____ the white eggs. (healthy)

Answers:

1. The blue car is as fast as the red one.
2. This bread is as good as the other one.
3. Brown eggs are as healthy as white eggs.

b) Using “less” and “more”, and other words to compare

Use “less” or “more”:

Examples:

I find golf **less** entertaining to watch than football.

I need to eat **more** filling food after exercising.

Add emphasis with specific expressions, using words such as “even”, “far”, “a great deal”, “a little”, “much” + comparative:

Examples:

I find swimming to be **even** more tiring than running.

I think swimming is **a little** more interesting than running though.

In formal English, prefer words such as **“slightly”, “considerably”, “significantly”**.

c) For advanced learners: comparing over time

Repeating the comparative allows to show that change is happening over time:

Examples:

The oceans get **more and more** polluted with microplastics.

Fortunately, we get **better and better** at finding ways to take it out of water.

To express that two things change at the same time, use the following structure:

“the + comparative + the + comparative”

Examples:

The longer we wait, **the more difficult** it will be to fully clean the seas.

The more the merrier.

Learn More:

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/grammar/british-grammar/comparison-adjectives-bigger-biggest-more-interesting>

<http://esl.fis.edu/grammar/rules/comp.htm>

<https://www.fluentu.com/blog/english/english-comparisons/>