

COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVE RULES

One-syllable adjectives –

Form the comparative and superlative forms of a one-syllable adjective by adding –er for the comparative form and –est for the superlative.

One-Syllable Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
tall	taller	tallest
old	older	oldest
long	longer	longest

- Henry is taller than Bill.
- Joan is the shortest of all the students.
- Bob is older than Jose.
- Of the twelve drivers, John was the oldest.
- My hair is thicker than Janet’s hair.
- His explanation is the strangest one I’ve heard.

If the one-syllable adjective ends with an e, just add –r for the comparative form and –st for the superlative form.

One-Syllable Adjective with Final -e	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
large	larger	largest
wise	wiser	wisest

- Mary's house is larger than our house.
- Mary's house is the largest of all the houses on the street.
- Arthur is wiser than his brother.
- Arthur is the wisest person I know.

If the one-syllable adjective ends with a single consonant with a vowel before it, double the consonant and add –er for the comparative form; and double the consonant and add –est for the superlative form.

One-Syllable Adjective Ending with a Single Consonant with a Single Vowel before It	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
big	bigger	biggest
thin	thinner	thinnest
fat	fatter	fattest

- My dog is bigger than your dog.
- My dog is the biggest of all the dogs in the neighborhood.
- Max is thinner than John.
- Of all the students in the class, Max is the thinnest.
- My mother is fatter than your mother.
- Mary is the fattest person I've ever seen.

Two-syllable adjectives.

With most two-syllable adjectives, you form the comparative with more and the superlative with most.

Two-Syllable Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
peaceful	more peaceful	most peaceful
pleasant	more pleasant	most pleasant
careful	more careful	most careful
thoughtful	more thoughtful	most thoughtful

- This morning is more peaceful than yesterday morning.
- Max's house in the mountains is the most peaceful in the world.
- Max is more careful than Mike.
- Of all the taxi drivers, Jack is the most careful.
- Jill is more thoughtful than your sister.
- Mary is the most thoughtful person I've ever met.

If the two-syllable adjectives ends with *-y*, change the *y* to *i* and add *-er* for the comparative form. For the superlative form change the *y* to *i* and add *-est*.

Two-Syllable Adjective Ending with -y	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
happy	happier	happiest
angry	angrier	angriest
busy	busier	busiest

- John is happier today than he was yesterday.
- John is the happiest boy in the world.
- Max is angrier than Mary.
- Of all of John's victims, Max is the angriest.
- Mary is busier than Max.
- Mary is the busiest person I've ever met.

Two-syllable adjectives ending in –er, -le, or –ow take –er and –est to form the comparative and superlative forms.

Two-Syllable Adjective Ending with -er, -le, or -ow	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
narrow	narrower	narrowest
gentle	gentler	gentlest

- The roads in this town are narrower than the roads in the city.
- This road is the narrowest of all the roads in California.
- Big dogs are gentler than small dogs.
- Of all the dogs in the world, English Mastiffs are the gentlest.

Adjectives with three or more syllables.

For adjectives with three syllables or more, you form the comparative with more and the superlative with most.

Adjective with Three or More Syllables	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
generous	more generous	most generous
important	more important	most important

Adjective with Three or More Syllables	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
intelligent	more intelligent	most intelligent

- John is more generous than Jack.
- John is the most generous of all the people I know.
- Health is more important than money.
- Of all the people I know, Max is the most important.
- Women are more intelligent than men.
- Mary is the most intelligent person I've ever met.

Exceptions:

Irregular adjectives.

Irregular Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
good	better	best
bad	worse	worst
far	farther	farthest
little	less	least
many	more	most

- Italian food is better than American food.
- My dog is the best dog in the world.
- My mother's cooking is worse than your mother's cooking.
- Of all the students in the class, Max is the worst.

Two-syllable adjectives that follow two rules. These adjectives can be used with -er and -est and with more and most.

Two-Syllable Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
clever	cleverer	cleverest
clever	more clever	most clever
gentle	gentler	gentlest
gentle	more gentle	most gentle
friendly	friendlier	friendliest
friendly	more friendly	most friendly



Two-Syllable Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
quiet	quieter	quietest
quiet	more quiet	most quiet
simple	simpler	simplest
simple	more simple	most simple

- Big dogs are gentler than small dogs.
- Of all the dogs in the world, English Mastiffs are the gentlest.
- Big dogs are more gentle than small dogs.
- Of all the dogs in the world, English Mastiffs are the most gentle.