

Grammar review: comparatives and superlatives

The basics

In English we can compare elements in two different ways using adjectives. One option is to compare one element to another in a sentence (comparative sentence), and the other option is to compare one element to all the other elements of the same kind (superlative sentence)

The apple is healthier than french fries (comparative between apple and french fries)

The apple is the healthiest fruit (superlative for apples in the group of fruits)

1. **Regular adjectives can be short:** an adjective is short when it takes just one or two syllables to say it. For example: hot, poor, cheap, cold, etc.
2. **short-Y adjectives:** a one or two syllable adjective ending in Y like healthy, busy, hungry, angry, lonely, funny, etc.
3. **Long adjectives:** adjectives that have two or more syllables and do not end with Y, such as expensive, complete, difficult, etc.
4. **Irregular adjectives:** are adjectives that do not follow any rule, and take different forms in their base form, as comparative, and as superlative.

Grammar rules in comparatives

In the following chart you will see some rules for writing comparative sentences.

Grammar rule	Adjective	Example as comparative
1. add a suffix to short adjectives 'er'.	hot cheap cold	My coffee is hotter than yours! My new phone is cheaper than my older phone My bedroom is colder in winter (than in other season)
2. To short-Y adjectives replace the Y	happy funny	I feel happier with you (than with another person) Your jokes are funnier than my father's.

with the suffix 'ier',		
3. To long adjectives add the word 'more'	expensive difficult	This school is more expensive than the other one. My English test is more difficult than my History project.

Grammar rules in superlatives

Grammar rule	Adjective	Example
1. Add "the -est" to short adjectives as superlative.	hot cheap cold	my coffee is the hottest in the table my new phone is the cheapest in the world My bedroom is the coldest room in the house
2. With short-Y adjectives, replace it with -iest	happy funny	I am the happiest person with you your jokes are the funniest I've heard.
3. To long adjectives add the phrase "the most"	expensive difficult	this school is the most expensive in the region My English tests are the most difficult in all my subjects

Comparative and superlative with irregular adjectives

Irregular adjective	Comparative example	Superlative example
good	My phone is better than yours	My phone is the best one in the world
bad	Your car is worse than my old bike	Your car is the worst car I've been into.
little	I have less time today than yesterday	I have the least time today than in any other day
far	That apple is farther than the orange	That apple is the farthest fruit I can see