

1 The **PATTERNS** in which adjectives and adverbs appear when you are making comparisons are usually:

A = B	A is as big as B
B < A	B is not as/ so good as A
B > C	B is better than C
A > B & C	A is the best of all the letters in the group.

*Use 'of' when the thing/ person being compared belongs to the same category as the object of the comparison, otherwise use 'in'.

2 **FORM**

a Add **-(e)r/ -(e)st** to one-syllable adjectives and to two-syllable adjectives in '-y' (and '-ow', '-le', '-er', '-ure').

adjective	comparative	superlative
old	older	oldest
brave	braver	bravest
sad	sadder	saddest
happy	happier	happiest
yellow	yellower	yellowest
simple	simpler/ more simple	simplest/ most simple
clever	cleverer	cleverest
mature	maturer	maturest

b Use **more/ most** with all other adjectives and with most adverbs, eg.:

- (adjectives) **more/ most** useful/ interesting...
- (adverbs) **more/ most** carefully, quietly..., but a few adverbs have comparative and superlative forms with **-er, -est**: *fast, hard, late, long, near, soon, early*, and in informal English *loud, quick* and *slow*.

c Remember the **irregular forms** of the following adjectives and adverbs:

adjective	adverb	comparative	superlative
good	well	better	best
bad	badly	worse	worst
little		less	least
many/ much	much	more	most
far		further/farther	furthest/farthest

3 **USES**

a To say that something has the same of a quality as another, more of a quality than another, or the most of a quality:
It is more interesting to visit a place than simply to read about it.

b To express the idea that (B) < (A) instead of (A) > (B), you can do it in one of three ways:

- with the construction **'not so/ as ... as'**:
Mars is not so/ as distant as Pluto.
- with an adjective of opposite meaning:
Mars is nearer than Pluto.
- with the construction **'less ... than'**:
Neptune is less distant than Pluto.

Only use this construction when you want to say that both objects are [adjective], but one is less [adjective] than the other.

c To say how something is increasing (**more and more**) or decreasing (**less and less**):

The weather is getting colder and colder.
He became more and more/ less and less interested.

d To say how one thing increases or decreases in relation to another:

The older I get, the happier I am.
The more I learn, the less I know.

e In a relative clause, especially with a perfect tense:

This is the best beer (that) I have ever drunk.
(=I have never drunk better beer.)

Notes:

- People usually say *'Which do you like best?'* when they are asking or talking about preferences, even if there are only two objects.
- 'Most + adjective'**, without 'the', means **'extremely'**: *She is most helpful.*

4 **MODIFICATION.** Comparatives and superlatives can be modified in this way:

<i>George is</i>	<i>twice/ half/ just</i>	<i>as rich as Tom (is).</i>
<i>Paris is</i>	<i>(very) much / far/ a lot / rather / a little/a bit</i>	<i>warmer than London. more/ less interesting.</i>
<i>Rome is</i>	<i>by far/ easily</i>	<i>the best city to live in. the most beautiful.</i>

Look at this sentence:

George is twice as rich as Tom.

(=Tom is **half as rich as George.**)

<i>George is</i>	<i>twice/ half + nearly/ almost just not quite not nearly -</i>	<i>as rich as Tom (is).</i>
<i>Paris is</i>	<i>(very) much + far/ a lot rather a little/ a bit -</i>	<i>warmer than London. more/ less interesting.</i>
<i>Rome is</i>	<i>by far/ easily</i>	<i>the best city to live in. the most beautiful city.</i>
<i>She wore her</i>	<i>very</i>	<i>best dress. (with adj. in '-est')</i>

The red dress isn't quite as pretty as the blue one.

(=The blue dress is **a bit prettier than the red one.**)

Paul isn't nearly as tall as George.

(=George is **much taller than Paul.**)

OR Paul is **much shorter than George.**)

1 **Rewrite the sentences in a different way.**

- 1 Iron isn't as hard as a diamond.
A diamond
- 2 Scotland is bigger than Wales.
Wales
- 3 Men don't live as long as women.
Women
- 4 England is not as big as New Zealand.
New Zealand
- 5 She plays better than I do.
I
- 6 Telling lies is not as bad as stealing.
Stealing
- 7 There are fewer rainy days in Buenos Aires than in New York.
There aren't
- 8 Summer nights in Cairo are warmer than in London.
In London
- 9 Cairo is hotter than London in July.
London isn't
- 10 A broken leg is more serious than a sprained wrist.
A sprained wrist
- 11 No one can imagine a more frightening illness than that.
That is
- 12 'Around Mexico' is the cheapest of all the holidays we offer.
We offer 'Around Mexico' as
- 13 Majorca is larger than Minorca and much larger than Cabrera.
Minorca is
- 14 Majorca is more interesting than Minorca.
Minorca
- 15 I have never eaten a better meal.
That was
- 16 Roses are my favourite flowers.
I like

- 17 My son gets dirtier than all the other children.
The other children
- 18 He plays football better than anyone in our team.
He is
- 19 I like classical music better than pop.
I don't
- 20 New York is colder than London in the winter.
London isn't
- 21 Paris is expensive, but have you ever been to New York?
New York is even
- 22 David didn't enjoy the film as much as Anne.
Anne
- 23 You shouldn't drive so fast in this wet weather.
You should
- 24 TV programmes used to be more interesting.
TV
- 25 That is the most incredible story I have ever heard.
I've never heard a
- 26 Prices here are higher than I thought they would be.
I didn't think
- 27 We had planned the meeting to end earlier.
The meeting ended
- 28 The meal cost us far more than we thought it would.
We didn't think
- 29 He was the sweetest little dog I'd ever seen.
I'd
- 30 I hadn't expected this exercise to be so difficult.
This exercise

Answer Key

- 1 A diamond *is harder than iron*.
- 2 Wales *isn't as big as Scotland*.
- 3 Women *live longer than men*.
- 4 New Zealand *is bigger than England*.
- 5 I *don't play as well as she does*.
- 6 Stealing *is worse than telling lies*.
- 7 There aren't *as/so many rainy days in Buenos Aires as in New York*.
- 8 In London *summer nights aren't as warm as in Cairo*.
- 9 London isn't *as hot as Cairo in July*.
- 10 A sprained wrist *isn't as serious as a broken leg*.
- 11 That is *the most frightening illness one can imagine*.
- 12 We offer 'Around Mexico' *as the cheapest of all the holidays*.
- 13 Minorca is *smaller than Majorca but larger than Cabrera*.
Minorca is *larger than Cabrera but not as large as Majorca*.
- 14 Minorca *is less interesting than Majorca*.
- 15 That was *the best meal I have ever eaten*.
- 16 I like *roses best*.
- 17 The other children *don't get as dirty as my son*.
- 18 He is *the best football player in our team*.
- 19 I don't *like pop as much as classical music*.
- 20 London isn't *as cold as New York in winter*.
- 21 New York is even *more expensive than Paris*.
- 22 Anne *enjoyed the film more than David*.
- 23 You should *drive more slowly in this wet weather*.
- 24 TV programmes *aren't as interesting as they used to be*.
- 25 I've never heard a *more incredible story*.
- 26 I didn't think *(that) prices here would be so/ as high (as they are)*.
- 27 The meeting ended *later than we had planned*.
- 28 We didn't think *(that) the meal would cost us so much*.
- 29 I'd *never seen a sweeter little dog/ such a sweet little dog*.
- 30 This exercise *was more difficult than I had expected*.