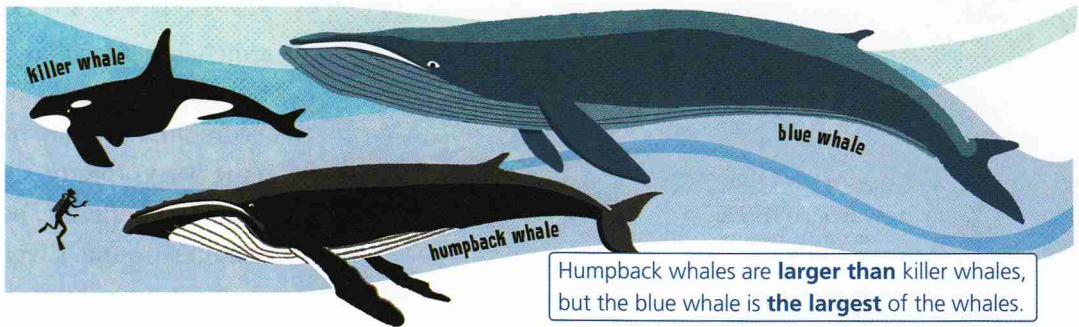


21 Comparison of adjectives



1 Comparative and superlative forms

	COMPARATIVE (two things)	SUPERLATIVE (more than two things)
adjectives with one syllable ¹	add -(e)r : large → larger small → smaller young → younger fast → faster	add -(e)st: large → the largest small → the smallest young → the youngest fast → the fastest
adjectives with two or more syllables ²	use more/less + adjective: useful → more/less useful expensive → more/less expensive interesting → more/less interesting	use the most/the least + adjective: useful → the most/least useful expensive → the most/least expensive interesting → the most/least interesting
irregular adjectives	bad → worse good → better far → farther/further well (= healthy) → better	bad → the worst good → the best far → the farthest/furthest

¹ Sometimes the spelling changes: dry → drier/the driest, big → bigger/the biggest (see page 351)

² Adjectives with two syllables where the second syllable is unstressed (often ending in -y, -ly, -ow, or -l) can sometimes form the comparative and superlative in the same way as one-syllable adjectives: friendly → friendlier/the friendliest, gentle → gentler/the gentlest, funny → funnier/the funniest

2 Comparative adjectives

We use **comparative adjectives** to compare two things. When we use a comparative adjective in front of a noun we add *than*:

✗ *Humpback whales are larger killer whales.* ✗ *Humpback whales are larger of killer whales.*
 ✓ *Humpback whales are **larger than** killer whales.*

We use object pronouns (*me, her*, etc.), not subject pronouns (*I, she*, etc.) after *than*:
Maria is taller than Anna. ✗ *Maria is taller than she.* ✓ *Maria is taller than **her**.*

⚠ We don't use *more* or *less* with an adjective that is already comparative:
 ✗ *Kevin is more taller than Sue.* ✗ *Sue is less taller than Kevin.*

We can use two comparatives to show that something is changing.
*The weather is getting **hotter and hotter**.*
*Food is becoming **more and more expensive** these days.*

🔊 **Pronunciation** ▶ 1.06

3 Superlative adjectives

We use **superlative adjectives** to compare more than two things. We use *the* or a possessive adjective (*my/your/his*, etc.) before the superlative form:

*Blue whales are **the largest** whales.* *What was **your best** subject at school?*

After superlatives we use *in* before singular nouns (i.e. the name of a place or group):
*The blue whale is the largest creature **in the world**.* *Ben is the oldest player **in the team**.*

But we use *of* before plural nouns:

*The blue whale is the largest **of the whales**.* *Ben is the oldest **of the players**.*

Making comparisons stronger and weaker ▶ Unit 22.3

Practice

1 Use the words below to write comparative sentences.

- 0 Canada / big / Britain. *Canada is bigger than Britain.*
- 1 This towel / dry / that one
- 2 Magazines / interesting / newspapers
- 3 My spelling / bad / Lucy's
- 4 The airport / far / the railway station
- 5 Paris / beautiful / Berlin
- 6 Steak / good / lamb

2 Use the words below to write superlative sentences. 2.41 Listen and check.

- 0 France / large country / the European Union *France is the largest country in the European Union.*
- 1 Mario / old student / my class
- 2 Selima / tallest / the athletes
- 3 New York / big city / North America
- 4 That / beautiful tree / the garden
- 5 Harry / experienced / the workers
- 6 Mine / nice / the rooms

3 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Find six more mistakes in the tour guide's statement and correct them.

 2.42 Listen and check.

'We only have four working elephants here at Songklan so it is ~~more small~~ ^{smaller} than the other elephant farms in the area. The largest elephant farm of this part of Thailand has 30 elephants! The four elephants here have different backgrounds and personalities. Mao-Mao travelled the most far; he came from Chaing Rai in the north of the country. Changra is the goodest worker, he loves lifting wood. But he's very greedy. He eats a lot more than the others! Selma is the most bad worker, she's very lazy. She's only eighteen years old but each year she gets lazier and more lazier! Tanan is friendlier than the other elephants; she really loves people.'

elephant	age	weight
Changra	22 years old	4500 kg
Selma	18 years old	1750 kg
Mao-Mao	24 years old	5000 kg
Tanan	17 years old	1500 kg



4 Write sentences about the elephants. Use information from Exercise 3 and the words in brackets.

- 0 (the lightest) *Tanan is the lightest of the elephants.*
- 1 (the heaviest)
- 2 (Changra / younger)
- 3 (Selma / older)
- 4 (the youngest)
- 5 (greedier / the others)
- 6 (the friendliest)

22 Comparative structures

Pets for sale



Kittens €30



Guinea pigs €20



Rabbits €20



Tortoise €100

The rabbits **aren't as expensive as** the kittens. The tortoise is **much more expensive than** the other animals.

1 as + adjective + as

To say that two things have the same quality we use *as + adjective + as*:

The guinea pigs are €20. = The guinea pigs are **as expensive as** the rabbits.
The rabbits are €20. = The rabbits are **as expensive as** the guinea pigs.

To describe a difference in quality we can use *not as + adjective + as*:

The guinea pigs are €20. = The guinea pigs **aren't as expensive as** the kittens.
The kittens are €30. = The kittens **aren't as cheap as** the guinea pigs.

If there is a big difference, we can use *not nearly as + adjective + as*:

I'm **not nearly as clever as** my brother. (= He's much cleverer than me.)

If there is a small difference, we can use *almost as/not quite as + adjective + as*:

My house is **almost as big as** yours. = My house **isn't quite as big as** yours. (slightly smaller)

Pronunciation ► 1.07

2 the same (as) and different from

We use *the same (as)* when two things are equal:

The price of the rabbits and the guinea pigs is **the same**. They both cost €20.


Mikal's motorbike is **the same as** mine. We both have Honda 250s.

We use *similar (to)* when something is nearly the same:

Indian elephants are **similar to** African elephants, but they're a bit smaller.

The opposite of *the same as* is *different from*. We can also use *different to*, but it is less common: Tigers are **different from** leopards. Tigers are **much bigger**.

American English *different than* ► page 352

 We use nouns and pronouns after *the same (as)*, *similar (to)* and *different (from)*, not adjectives:

✗ They are ~~the same expensive~~. ✓ They are **the same price**.

✗ My brother and I are ~~different tall~~. ✓ My brother and I are **different heights**.

3 Making comparisons stronger or weaker

We can make comparisons stronger with *much*, *a lot* and *far*:

The tortoise is **much more expensive than** the other animals.

New York is **a lot bigger than** Paris.

We can make comparisons weaker with *a bit*, *slightly* or *a little*:

The rabbits are **slightly cheaper than** the kittens. My sister is **a bit younger than** me.

We can make superlatives stronger with *by far*. It means there is a big difference:

Fredrik is **by far the tallest** student in our class. (= He's much taller than all the others.)

We can make superlatives weaker with *one of* or *among*:

This is **one of the best** hospitals in the country. (Only a few hospitals may be better.)


Julie is **among the cleverest** of our students.

too, *enough* and *so/such* with adjectives ► Unit 79.2/3

Practice

1 Choose the best answer, A or B.

- 0 Your sunglasses are similar to mine.
A They are exactly the same. (B) They are almost the same.
- 1 Jackie isn't as friendly as Lucy.
A Lucy is friendlier than Jackie. B Jackie is friendlier than Lucy.
- 2 This bed is as comfortable as my old one.
A My old bed was more comfortable. B The beds are both comfortable.
- 3 Ana isn't nearly as rich as Susie.
A Susie is much richer than Ana. B Susie is a little richer than Ana.
- 4 Our TV is almost as big as Michael's.
A Michael's TV is a little bigger than ours. B Michael's TV is much bigger than ours.
- 5 I had one of the best exam results in the school.
A Nobody had a better result. B One or two people had a better result.


2 **GRAMMAR IN USE** The words in the box are missing from the text. Put them in the correct positions. (They are in the same order as in the text.)  2.43 Listen and check.

~~lot~~ of far to from not more

Television viewers are sometimes surprised to learn that natural history programmes are often a ^{lot} more popular than soap operas or films. One the most famous presenters is David Attenborough. He has been making programmes about nature since the 1960s.

In those days Jacques Cousteau was by the most famous TV presenter of nature programmes. Although Cousteau only made programmes about life in the sea, his style of presenting was similar Attenborough's – they both seem like friendly uncles who really love nature.

Of course, today's programmes are different those of fifty years ago. In those days cameras were nearly as small and light as they are now. Today the technology is much advanced and there are digital special effects which can help us understand the complexity of the natural world.

3 Complete the second sentence so it means the same as the first, using the words in brackets. Use two to five words in your answer.  2.44 Listen and check.

- 0 Lions are stronger than tigers. (aren't)
Tigers *aren't as strong as* lions.
- 1 I'm not as old as my sister. (than)
My sister
- 2 Our cat is slightly smaller than Daniel's. (quite)
Our cat isn't Daniel's.
- 3 Look, Melanie's dress is really similar to your mother's. (same)
Look, Melanie's dress your mother's.
- 4 Nokia phones are not the same as Motorola ones. (from)
Nokia phones Motorola ones.
- 5 The Metropole is much more expensive than any other hotel in our town. (far)
The Metropole is hotel in our town.
- 6 Prices aren't quite as low as they used to be. (bit)
Prices are they used to be.