

Making comparisons

Modifiers

- Comparisons can be modified to make them less extreme.

Examples:

*This isn't **quite as simple as** I predicted.*

*This is **probably the best** mobile phone at the moment.*

*I've done **just about as much as** I can.*

*This is **one of the most expensive** items in the store.*

*The new scooter is **not nearly / half / nowhere near** as fast as the old one.*

- Comparisons can be made stronger.

Examples:

*Google is **far and away the most popular** search engine in the world.*

*Pilates is **rather more demanding than** I thought.*

*Football is **the most popular** sport in the world **by far**.*

*Tennis is **far / a lot / much more demanding**.*

*His last book is **every bit as gripping as** the previous one.*

*It's **much / miles / loads more interesting**. (miles and load are informal)*

Comparative constructions

- as + adjective + a + noun + as
*It's **not as easy a street as** it used to be.*
- too + adjective + a + noun
*A nuclear war is **too terrible a thing** to contemplate. (formal)*
- not as / so + adjective + to-infinitive + as
*French is **not so difficult to learn as** I thought.*
- more + adjective + than + adjective / not so much + adjective + as + adjective
(This construction can be used to make a distinction between two similar adjectives.)
*I was **more disappointed than angry**.*
*I was **not so much angry as disappointed**.*

be + comparative + to-infinitive

- **it + be + comparative + to-infinitive**
*It's **faster to take the tube than to go** by car.*
- **noun + be + comparative + to-infinitive**
*Spanish **is easier to learn than** Japanese.*

comparative + comparative

Two comparatives together are often used in descriptive writing, with verbs of becoming, changing, movement, etc.

Examples:

*It suddenly got **darker and darker**.*

*The kidnappers became **more and more restless**.*

the + comparative or superlative + of the + number / quantity

- This structure can be used with a comparative to compare two things
*She is by far / easily **the smarter of the two**.*
- *It* can be used with a superlative to compare one thing with many things
*I think this one is **the most convenient of the lot / them all**.*

present perfect + superlative

We often use the present perfect with a superlative

*Example: This is **the worst film I've ever seen**.*

the + comparative, the + comparative

- This structure is often used to give advice.
***The later** you arrive at the meeting, **the angrier** the boss will get.*
- Fixed phrases include:
The sooner, the better.
The more, the merrier.