

SEMINAR 1

Adjectives and Adverbs

Order of adjectives before a noun

Position	1st*	2nd*	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
	Opinion	Size	Age	Shape	Colour	Material	Origin	Purpose
	Brilliant	Small	Old	Square	Black	Plastic	British	Racing
	Bad	Big	New	Circular	Blue	Wooden	American	Running

Adapted from <https://bestofmvm.wordpress.com/2015/03/26/adjective-order-in-english-language-esl-language-types-of-adjectives-adjective-order-vocabulary-from-pre-intermediate-to-advanced-levels/>.

Task 1: Put the adjectives in the correct order. You may

1. a journal medical thick
2. a red big book
3. a French recent textbook
4. a beautiful ancient Italian sight
5. a cover brown leather
6. four last weeks the
7. a little house white
8. a scholar bright English
9. the three first days
10. German excellent research
11. the two last weeks
12. a portable expensive computer
13. a Swiss extensive survey
14. a library historical old
15. a corrupted Italian politician
16. a medical promising experiment



17. an old lovely house
18. species protected endangered
19. experienced journalist an British
20. latest news world the

Task 2: Use the correct form of the adjective in bold adding the *-ed/-ing* ending.

1. Grammar rules **frustrate** me. They're not logical. They are so _____.
2. They frustrate me but they don't **bore** me. I am never _____ when I study grammar.
3. Normally a language class **stimulates** me. Of course, it depends on the teacher. With some teachers I don't feel _____.
4. Their classes **bore** me. And I'm not the only one. Many students find these classes very _____.
5. If teachers want to **interest** the students, they must use _____ material.
6. How can teachers **interest** students? One way is to have _____ discussions.
7. Certain subjects **interest** almost everybody. For example, most students are _____ in the subject of crime and morality.
8. It's important to speak in a language class, but it **frightens** many students. They are too _____ to speak in front of so many people.
9. And me? Well, certain things **frighten** me, but not that. I am never _____ when I speak in class.
10. Exams, however, really **frighten** me. Exams are the only _____ thing in a language course.
11. Exams **tire** me, both physically and emotionally. After a two-hour exam I am really _____.
12. All the mental effort **exhausts** the student. Ask anybody. They all agree. Exams are _____.
13. But if I get a good grade, now that **excites** me. And if I get more than ninety percent, I am really _____.

<http://ww2.college-em.qc.ca/prof/epritchard/boreding.htm>

Adjectives (gradable / non-gradable)

Gradable / Non-gradable adjectives

Adjectives can be either gradable or non-gradable

Gradable

Gradable adjectives are adjectives like 'cold' 'hot' and 'frightened'. You can be *very cold* or a *bit cold*. Gradable adjectives show that something can have different degrees.

Non-gradable

Non-gradable adjectives are adjectives like 'married' or 'wooden'. You can't be *very married* or a *bit married*. Non-gradable adjectives do not have different degrees.

Adjectives like 'terrifying', 'freezing' 'amazing' are also non-gradable adjectives. They already contain the idea of 'very' in their definitions – 'freezing' means 'very cold' etc.

Using adverbs of degree

When we use adverbs of degree to modify adjectives we usually have to use different adverbs for gradable and non-gradable adjectives.

- NOT ~~I'm completely hot.~~
- NOT ~~It was very fantastic!~~

With gradable adjectives

- *It's a bit cold in here. Shall I turn the fire on?*
- *He's very interested in history. Why don't you buy him a history book?*
- *This exercise is really difficult. I don't know any of the answers.*
- *I'm extremely tired. I'm going to bed.*

The adverbs a **bit**, **very**, **really**, **extremely** and **quite** can all be used with gradable adjectives.

With non-gradable adjectives

- *It's absolutely freezing in here. Shall I turn the fire on?*
- *He's completely fascinated by history. Why don't you buy him a history book?*
- *This exercise is absolutely impossible.*



- *That film is really terrifying. Don't go and see it on your own.*

The adverbs **absolutely** and **completely** can be used with non-gradable adjectives.

Notice that **really** can be used with both gradable AND non-gradable adjectives

Task 3: Match the gradable adjectives with the extreme ones.

Adjectives

Gradable

1. big
2. small
3. hot
4. cold
5. hungry
6. pretty
7. tasty
8. tired
9. bad
10. nice
11. ugly
12. funny
13. stupid
14. surprising
15. good
16. angry
17. interesting
18. scared

Extreme

- a. freezing
- b. starving
- c. delicious
- d. exhausted
- e. boiling
- f. gorgeous
- h. tiny
- i. awful
- j. hideous
- l. fascinating
- n. hilarious
- o. terrified
- p. furious
- q. starving
- s. enormous
- r. idiotic
- s. awesome
- t. startling

Task 4: Look at the use of **very** in the text below.

In 2002 Steve Fossett became the first man to fly a balloon solo non-stop around the world. The millionaire adventurer had made six previous attempts on the record, but had been **very** unfortunate. In 1998 he had a **very** lucky escape when his balloon plunged 8.700 metres into the sea, ' It was **very** terrifying and I was **very** disappointed' said Fosset afterwards.

This time, after leaving the Australian town of Northam on June 19th, the 58-year-old American covered more than 19.000 miles in thirteen days, a **very** amazing achievement. He travelled **very** fast, sometimes at speeds of up to 200 mph. in **very** low temperatures, Fossett spent two weeks in *The Spirit of Freedom*, a **very** small capsule attached to a 42-metre-high silver balloon. Fosset experienced some **very** frightening moments, especially over the Andes,



where it was **very** difficult to keep the balloon stable.

'Steve has conquered the last quite significant aviation challenge in the world,' said Sir Richard Branson, who himself had tried unsuccessfully to win the record. 'To have flown 20,000 miles over the ocean, at the mercy of the weather, alone in a cold, unpressurized cabin powered by the wind is **very** astonishing.' Fossett was **very** exhausted after the flight, but speaking by satellite phone shortly after landing in Australia, he said, 'It is a **very** wonderful time for me. Finally after six flights I have succeeded and it is a **very** satisfying experience.'

1. In which cases is the adverb **very** incorrectly used? Use an appropriate adverb.
2. Try to improve the text by changing **very** for other intensifying adverbs.

<http://eoiutebo.educa.aragon.es/susana/gradable.doc>

Task 5: Put the correct intensifying adjective in the gap and make correct collocations. Some of them will be used more than once.

great utter big large deep high heavy strong

1. He has a understanding of Greek culture.
2. She was in despair at the thought of the job.
3. Unfortunately, Tom was a drinker.
4. The lawyer went into detail as he explained the case to the judge.
5. Mary has a opinion of his work.
6. I came home, got into bed and immediately fell into a sleep.
7. Jack is a spender. He loves to buy many expensive books.
8. Don't listen to him. He's an idiot.
9. There was a scale earthquake in San Francisco last weekend.
10. I must admit that his performance was a disappointment.
11. The cost of energy in the area has led to limited use of the air conditioner.
12. When I walked into the study, Peter was in thought.
13. She explained her situation in detail.
14. I was in bliss when I heard the news.
15. I arrived late at her presentation as there was traffic.
16. A..... proportion of students live in the dormitory.

Forming Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

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



One-Syllable Adjective Comparative Form Superlative Form

long longer longest

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 car is **larger** *than* Max's car.
- Mary's house is **the tallest** *of* all the houses on the block.
- Max is **wiser** *than* his brother.
- Max 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

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

Two-Syllable Adjective Ending with -y Comparative Form Superlative Form

happy	happier	happiest
angry	angrier	angriest
busy	busier	busiest

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

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
intelligent	more intelligent	most intelligent

Irregular Adjective Comparative Form

good	better	best
bad	worse	worst
far	farther	farthest
little	less	least
many	more	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
quiet	quieter	quietest
quiet	more quiet	most quiet
simple	simpler	simplest
simple	more simple	most simple



Task 6: Complete the text about a new factory with the comparative or superlative form of the word in brackets.

The opening of the new factory, fitted with _____ 1. (up-to-date) equipment in the industry, meant that Ginnorex plc could produce _____ 2. (high) quality goods than its competitors. The premises were located at a motorway intersection, ensuring _____ 3. (fast) delivery times for the finished products, compared to the old suburban factory. Along with the building, Ginnorex invested in IT, for a _____ 4. (integrated) supply chain. These strategic decisions led to increased customer satisfaction; soon, the company was _____ 5. (profitable) than ever before. In addition, the staff were _____ 6. (happy) with their _____ 7. (comfortable) working environment, so employee absenteeism became _____ 8. (problematic). The HR department noted that staff turnover was _____ 9. (low) in the city, when compared with other factories of a similar size. Last year, Ginnorex won an award for being _____ 10. (good) local employers.

Task 7: Correct the seven mistakes in the text about the Olympic Games. Some sentences are correct.

The Olympics are sometimes described as a greatest show on earth. The Summer Games are certainly the biggest event of the world in terms of the number of athletes involved. However, most spectators do not realize that the so-called "Olympic family" consists of many more people than just the competitors. In fact, there are many more coaches, national officials, sports journalists, and other accredited personnel as athletes. The Olympics usually end up being one of the most expensive shows on earth, as well. The most popular sports differ than one host country to another; ice hockey is a major game in Canada but not in Brazil, for example. The tickets that are the hardest to get are almost always for the opening and closing ceremonies. The Paralympics, on other hand, until recently were not nearly as higher profile as the Olympics themselves. It used to be easier enough to get tickets to the major Paralympic events. Now, however, the Paralympics have become too popular to guarantee seats for all their fans.

Task 8: Complete the transcript of a presentation about economic difficulties using the phrases given.

almost twice as heavy fast as the highest the best the sooner, the better
in contrast to three times heavier nearest unlike like stronger oldest
its worst highest more and more the strongest by far the longest

Let me begin my talk by saying that this country is in _____ (1) economic situation for a generation. That is the reality. We are entering the sixth consecutive quarter of negative growth, _____ (2) period of recession in the working lives of most of you in this room. _____ (3) businesses are going bankrupt. Only yesterday, one of our _____ (4) and best-loved retail chains went into receivership. Unemployment is at its _____ (5) level since the Great Depression of the 1930s. So far the authorities have declined to take strong action. We need _____ (6) government, and it must take _____ (7) possible action. _____ (8) some of the pessimistic views you heard earlier, I believe that change is possible. _____ (9) everyone here, I deplore the excessive salaries and bonuses of the bankers and the boardroom elite. _____ (10) paid – those

whom society has rewarded the most richly – must bear their share of the responsibility. However, _____ (11) many of you, I think the answer lies with less tax, not more regulation. Our tax burden is _____ (12) as our _____ (13) neighbours, and then some of the newly emerging economies that we are trying to compete with. _____ (14) way forward – the simplest solution – is to unshackle business, and let the economy grow as _____ (15) it can. And I say, _____ (16)!

Task 9: Complete the words in the transcript of a seminar discussion. Two university students are talking about learning languages at different ages. The first letter of the incomplete word is given. You may need an adjective, an adverb or a preposition.

Alain: I think it's much e_____ to learn a language as a child than as an adult. Babies learn languages without any effort, but the o_____ you get, the m_____ you struggle.
 Maria: I know what you mean, but look at it this way: babies, unlike adults, only have to learn how to speak; they don't have to worry about reading and writing!
 Alain: Yes, but it's e_____ the same with children studying a second language at school. They pick up the basics of a new language m_____ more q_____ than adults do. And the y_____ they are, the easier it is for them.
 Maria: My own experience is q_____ different f_____ yours, I'm afraid! Children may be b_____ than adults at pronunciation, but they are not always very motivated at school, are they? I took English classes all through high school, but it wasn't n_____ as useful as the time I spent working at my aunt's hotel in the summer. Every day I could understand a little more than before and I got m_____ and m_____ confident the l_____ I worked there. By the time I went back to school, I was easily the b_____ in the class.

Task 10: Adjective or adverb? Choose the correct item.

1. He (correct, correctly) defined the terms. The answer sounded (correctly, correct).
2. She (quickly, quick) adjusted the fees. She adapted (quick, quickly) to any situation.
3. He measured the floor (exact, exactly). They proved to be (perfectly, perfect) (exact, exactly) measurements.
4. The stillness of the tomb was (awfully, awful). The tomb was (awfully, awful) still.
5. It was a (dangerously, dangerous) lake to swim in. The man was (dangerous, dangerously) drunk. The gas smelled (dangerously, dangerous).
6. She performed (magnificent, magnificently). It was a (magnificent, magnificently) beautiful performance.
7. Her voice sounds (beautifully, beautiful). She sang the song (exact, exactly) as it was written. We heard it (perfectly, perfect).
8. He was a very (sensibly, sensible) person. He acted very (sensible, sensibly).



9. Mike wrote too (slow, slowly) on the exam. He always writes (slow, slowly).
10. Talk (softly, soft) or don't talk at all. The music played (softly, soft).
11. Andrea knows the material very (good, well). She always treats us (good, well).
12. You must send payments (regular, regularly). We deal on a (strictly, strict) cash basis.
13. The mechanic's tools were (well, good). The foreman said that his work was (good, well) done.
14. She worked (careful, carefully) with the sick child. She was a very (careful, carefully) worker.
15. He did not pass the course as (easy, easily) as he thought he would.
16. I find this novel very (interesting, interestingly). It was (interesting, interestingly) written.

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/exercises/print/2/2/8/>

Task 11: Explain how the word in bold changes the meaning of the sentence.

1. He works **hard**. / He **hardly** works.
2. She is **highly** appreciated. / She got **high** marks.
3. I am never **late**. / She has been coming **lately**.
4. Do you feel **good**? I don't feel **well** today.
5. You look **well**. / It looks **good**.

Task 12: Choose the correct answer.

1. His new idea sounds good/well.
2. We regularly meet at our month/monthly meetings.
3. They went straightly/straight home.
4. Shall I speak quicker/more quickly?
5. All the teachers behaved friendly/in a friendly way.

Task 13: Work in groups. Ask and answer these questions.

1. Compare the advantages and disadvantages for a student doing a degree at a local college or a university in the capital city. Choose at least three factors to compare (e.g. cost, flexibility of study, quality or qualification).
2. Compare two cities (or two regions of the same country or two countries) that you know. Make your point of view clear, whether you are considering them as a resident, a tourist, or a company considering setting up an office there.

3. Have you ever tried to solve a problem and instead made the problem worse? What was the problem, what did you do, and how did that make the problem worse?
4. In most fields of study, researchers must evaluate competing theories. Briefly describe and compare two theories from your field of study.

Task 14: *Translate into English.*

1. Tento předmět není tak obtížný, jak se zdá.
2. Náš výzkum je už nyní mnohem úspěšnější, než jsme čekali.
3. Neprojevují o to zájem ani v nejmenším.
4. Dříve nebo později to budeme muset udělat.
5. Čím více se tímto problémem budeme zabývat, tím rychleji jej můžeme vyřešit.
6. Měla by se více snažit.
7. Tento časopis vychází v měsíčních intervalech.
8. Na první pohled vypadají výsledky dobře, ale více budeme vědět později.
9. Bude to menší zlo.
10. Chtěli bychom se posunout trochu dále.

Sources:

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