

DEGREES OF COMPARISON

There are three degrees of Comparison:

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|------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| 1) Positive: | dark | tall | useful |
| 2) Comparative: | darker | taller | more useful |
| 3) Superlative: | darkest | tallest | most useful |

There are two ways of forming the comparative and the superlative:

1) by adding er, est to the positive : small, smaller, smallest;

tall	taller	tallest
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2) by means of more and most: difficult, more difficult, most difficult.

- I) A) When an adjective of one syllable ends in two consonants or in a single consonant preceded by two vowels, er, and est are added:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
long	longer	longest
sweet	sweeter	sweetest

B) When an adjective of one syllable ends in a single consonant preceded by a short vowel, the consonant is doubled before er, and est:

hot	hotter	hottest
fat	fatter	fattest

C) When an adjective of one syllable ends in e, only r and st are added:

brave	braver	bravest
wise	wiser	wisest

D) When an adjective of one syllable ends in y preceded by a consonant, we change the 'y' into i before adding er, est:

happy	happier	happiest
merry	merrier	merriest

Exception: shy, shyer, shyest

E) When the final Y is preceded by a vowel, we simply add -er, -est:

gay	gayer	gayest
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grey	greyer	greyest
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F) Adjectives of two syllables ending in -er, -le, -y and -ow generally form their comparative and superlative in the same way as the adjectives of one syllable:

clever	cleverer	cleverest
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noble	nobler	noblest
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happy	happier	happiest
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mellow	mellower	mellowest
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II) Adjectives of more than two syllables, and many adjectives of two syllables, form the comparative and superlative by means of more and most.

awful	more awful	most awful
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careful	more careful	most careful
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beautiful	more beautiful	most beautiful
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We can change the degrees of comparison of adjectives and adverbs, without changing the meaning of the sentences.

Examine the following examples:

1) Positive: I am not as tall as he.

Comparative: He is taller than I

2) Positive: He is as dull as an ass.

Comparative: An ass is not duller than he is.

3) Superlative: London is the biggest city in the world.

Comparative: London is bigger than any other city in the world.

Positive: No other city in the world is so big as London.

4) Superlative: Subhas Bose was one of the greatest Patriots of India.

Comparative: Subhas Bose was greater than most (many) other patriots of India.

Positive: Very few patriots of India were so great as Subhas Bose.

- 5) Positive: Some girls in the class are at least as beautiful as Sita.
Comparative: Sita is not more beautiful than some other girls in the class Or
Some girls in the class are not less beautiful than Sita.
Superlative: Sita is not the most beautiful of all the girls in the Class.

Important: Basically every word is made of a syllable or syllables that must have/has a vowel sound. A syllable is a group of letters that must be pronounced at a stretch having at least one vowel sound. Sometimes a single vowel sound itself may form a syllable as in: 'O! I forgot it. Ah! Or Oh! Etc. Thus words are monosyllabic, disyllabic, tri-syllabic and polysyllabic. Usually, mono and disyllabic words take –er and –est to form their positive and superlative degrees respectively. Tri and polysyllabic words are preceded by much, more and most. The thought of –er or –est in them looks quite absurd. Eg much beau.ti.ful, more beautiful, and most beautiful(not beautifuller or beautifullest)

Practice Bits

- 1) This summer is _____ than the previous summer. (hot)
- 2) Harsha is the _____ boy in the class. (intelligent)
- 3) Her doll is _____ than yours. (pretty)
- 4) Name the _____ city in the world. (big)
- 5) He is the _____ friend I have. (good)
- 6) Iron is _____ than any other metal. (useful)
- 7) Ram's work is bad, Hari's is _____, but Govind's work is the _____,
(bad)
- 8) Silver is _____ than gold. (cheap)
- 9) The Eiffel Tower is _____ than the Qutub Minar. (tall)
- 10) Akbar was the _____ Mughal Emperor. (great)
- 11) Prevention is _____ than cure. (good)
- 12) Mathematics is the _____ subject. (difficult)

- 13) Apples are _____ than oranges. (costly)
- 14) Mr. Sharma is the _____ person I have ever seen. (fat)
- 15) This suitcase is _____ than that one. (heavy)
- 16) The number of boys present was _____ than the number of girls present in the class. (many)
- 17) Sita was the _____ tired of them all. (little)
- 18) Rohan's house is the _____ from college. (far)
- 19) Have you heard the _____ news? (late)
- 20) He is the _____ member in the Rajya Sabha. (old)

Key:

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|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1) hotter, | 2) most intelligent, | 3) prettier, | 4) biggest, | 5) best, |
| 6) more useful, | 7) worse, worst, | 8) cheaper, | 9) taller, | 10) greatest, |
| 11) better, | 12) most difficult, | 13) costlier, | 14) fattest, | 15) heavier, |
| 16) more than, | 17) least, | 18) farthest, | 19) latest, | 20) oldest |

TEXTUAL EXERCISES

Exercise I:

- 1) Mount Everest is the highest peak in the world. (use 'higher than')
- 2) 'Shakuntala' is better than any other drama in Sanskrit. (use 'as good as')
- 3) No other town in Malaysia is as old as Malacca (use 'the oldest')
- 4) The lion is the most ferocious animal. (use 'as ferocious as')
- 5) He is richer than all other men in the village. (use 'the richest')

Exercise II:

- 1) Very few animals are as useful as the cow. (use 'the most useful')
- 2) Latif is more hard working than most other boys. (use 'as hard working as')
- 3) Ashoka was one of the most powerful emperors. (use 'more powerful than')
- 4) India is hotter than most other countries. (use 'the hottest')
- 5) Very few poets are as great as Keats. (use 'greater than')

Exercise III:

- 1) Silver is not as precious as gold. (use 'more precious than')
- 2) The pen is mightier than the sword. (use 'not as mighty as')
- 3) A deer runs faster than a horse. (use 'not fast as')
- 4) Your knife is not as sharp as mine. (use 'sharper than')
- 5) A foolish friend is not as good as a wise enemy. (use 'better than')

Exercise IV:

- 1) Sharukh Khan is not greater than Dilip Kumar. (use 'as great as')
- 2) My house is at least as big as yours. (use 'not bigger than')
- 3) The Taj Mahal is at least as famous as the Statue of Liberty. (Use 'not more famous than')

- 4) Sanjeev is not fatter than Veeru. (use 'as fat as')
- 5) This tree is as old as that tree. (use 'not older than')

Exercise V:

- 1) Tennyson is not greater than some other poets. (use 'not the greatest')
- 2) Some boys are at least as industrious as Suresh (use 'not more industrious than')
- 3) This is not the best college in the city. (use 'as good as')
- 4) Rohan is not the dullest boy in the class. (use 'not duller than')
- 5) Some students are at least as clever as Rani. (use 'not the cleverest')

Key

Exercise I:

- 1) Mount Everest is higher than any other peak in the world.
- 2) No other drama in Sanskrit is as good as Shakunthala.
- 3) Malacca is the oldest town in Malaysia.
- 4) No other animal is as ferocious as the lion.
- 5) He is the richest man in the village.

Exercise II:

- 1) The cow is one of the most useful animals.
- 2) Very few boys are as hardworking as Latif.
- 3) Ashoka was more powerful than many other emperors.
- 4) India is one of the hottest countries.
- 5) Keats is greater than many other poets.

Exercise III:

- 1) Gold is more precious than silver.
- 2) The sword is not as mighty as the pen.
- 3) A horse doesn't run as fast as a deer.

- 4) My knife is sharper than yours.
- 5) A wise enemy is better than a foolish friend.

Exercise IV:

- 1) Dileep Kumar is not as great as Sharukh Khan.
- 2) Your house is not bigger than mine.
- 3) The Statue of Liberty is not more famous than the Taj Mahal.
- 4) Veeru is as fat as Sanjeev.
- 5) That tree is not older than this tree.

Exercise V:

- 1) Tennyson is not the greatest poet.
- 2) Suresh is not more industrious than some other boys.
- 3) Some colleges in the city are at least as good as this.
- 4) Rohan is not duller than some other boys in the class.
- 5) Rani is not the cleverest student.

FROM PREVIOUS PAPERS (BIE)

Mar 2008:

1) New York is the biggest city in the world (Change into comparative)

A: New York City is bigger than any other city other in the world.

May 2008:

1) The rose is loveliest of all flowers. (Change into positive)

A: No other flower is as lovely as the rose.

March 2009:

1) This is the oldest tree in the garden. (Change into comparative degree)

A: This is older than any other tree in the garden.

May 2009:

1) Govind is one of the best programmers. (into positive degree)

A: Very few programmers are as good as Govind.

March 2010:

1) Mumbai is larger than most other cities. (Change into superlative degree)

A: Mumbai is one of the largest cities.

June 2010:

1) Iron is cheaper than gold (Change into positive)

A: Gold is not as cheap as iron.