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Ensuring correct usage of Comparatives and Superlatives

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Sometimes inEnglish communication,we come across situations where we have to compare two people or things and sometimes we have to describe an object which is at the upper or lower limit of a quality. In such situations, comparative and superlative adjectives are used.

In the following article , these two important aspects of English Grammar are discussed.

Comparatives

Comparative adjectives are used to compare one thing to another. It mainly describes people and things. When we compare one thing with another, we use “than” in a sentence.

Examples:

· Lakshmi is two years older than me.
· He is a better player than Raina.
· Rajasthan is much bigger than Goa.

The above examples shows the comparison between people and things.

A tiger is faster than a turtle.

When we want to describe how something or someone changes, we can use two comparatives with “and”.

Examples:

· The bag got heavier and heavier.
· These days groceries are getting more and more expensive.
· She is looking older and older day by day.

Superlatives

Superlatives are used where a subject is compared to a group of objects. In superlatives we use “the” in the sentence.

Examples:

· Tom & Jerry is the oldest cartoon.
· Pooja is the tallest girl in our class.
· This is the longest song that I have ever heard.

Rules to use comparatives and superlatives

1. When there is one syllable adjective, we add er in comparatives and est in superlatives.

Examples:

- Tall taller tallest
- Fat fatter fattest
- Big bigger biggest
- Sad sadder saddest

2. When there are two syllable adjectives ending in **y**, firstly we replace **y** with **i**, and then add **er** in comparatives and **est** in superlatives.

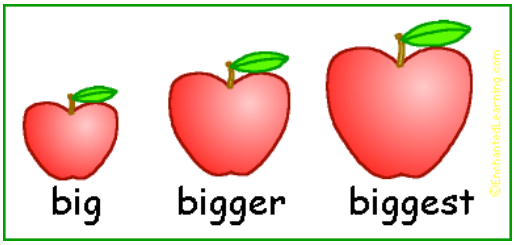
Examples:

- Happy happier happiest
- Busy busier busiest

3. When there are two syllable and more than two adjectives without y at the end then we add more + adjective + than in comparative and most + adjective + than.

Examples:

- The Ganges is more famous than the Thames.
- Delhi is much hotter than Sweden.
- Everest is the highest mountain in the world.



There are some adjectives which have uncommon comparative and superlatives forms:

- good better best
- bad worse worst
- little less least
- much more most

Take a test and check how well you have known comparatives and superlatives

1. Australia is (big) _____ than England.
2. I'm (good) _____ now than yesterday.
3. He thinks Chinese is (difficult) _____ language in the world.

4. Sri Lanka played (bad) _____ than India yesterday.
5. Cats are not (intelligent) _____ as dogs.
6. (hot) _____ desert of all is the Sahara and it's in Africa.
7. Who is (talkative) _____ person in your family?

Answers: 1. bigger 2. better 3. the most difficult 4. worse 5. as intelligent 6. The hottest 7. the most talkative

Understanding the correct usage of comparatives and superlatives will help you compare and improve your communication skills. Join an online English tutor and make your English fluent.

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- By Shailja Varma

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