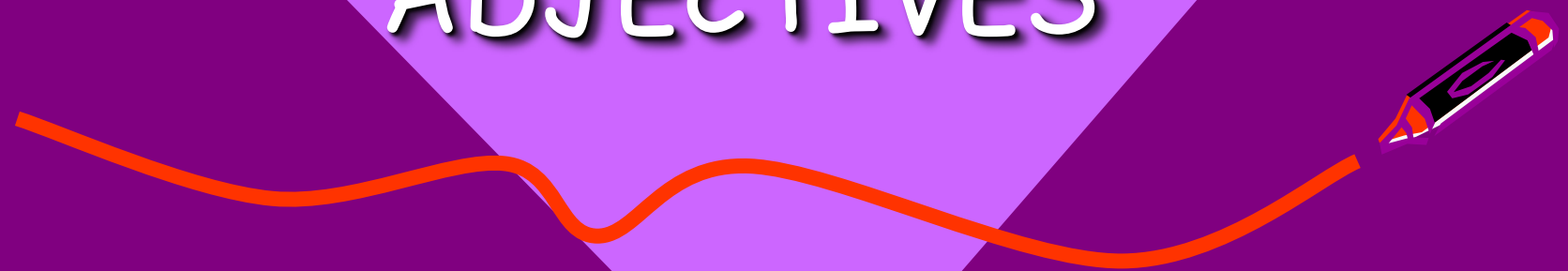


COMPARATIVE AND
SUPERLATIVE
ADJECTIVES

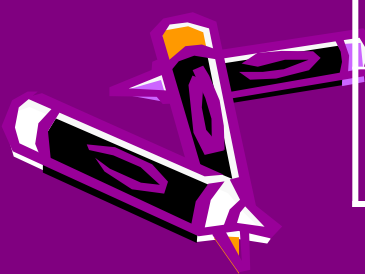


SOME RULES ABOUT FORMING COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES



- One syllable adjectives generally form the comparative by adding **-er** and the superlative by adding **-est**, e.g.:

| Adjective | Comparative | Superlative |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| Soft | Softer | The softest |
| Cheap | Cheaper | The cheapest |
| Sweet | Sweeter | The sweetest |
| Thin | Thinner | The thinnest |



SPELLING RULES



- Note that if a one syllable adjective ends in a single vowel letter followed by a single consonant letter, the consonant letter is doubled, e.g.: thin → thinner, big → biggest.
- If an adjective ends in -e, this is removed when adding -er/-est, e.g.: wide → wider/widest.
- If an adjective ends in a consonant followed by -y, -y is replaced by -i when adding -er/-est, e.g.: dry → drier/driest.



TWO SYLLABLE ADJECTIVES



- two syllable adjectives which end in **-y** usually form the comparative by adding **-er** and the superlative by adding **-est**, (note the change of **-y** to **-i** in the comparative/superlative) e.g.:

| Adjective | Comparative | superlative |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| Lucky | luckier | The luckiest |
| Pretty | Prettier | The prettiest |
| Tidy | Tidier | The tidiest |



TWO SYLLABLE ADJECTIVES

- two syllable adjectives ending in **-ed**, **-ing**, **-ful**, or **-less** always form the comparative with **more** and the superlative with **the most**, e.g.:

| Adjective | Comparative | superlative |
|-----------|--------------|------------------|
| Worried | More worried | The most worried |
| Boring | More boring | The most boring |
| Careful | More careful | The most careful |
| Useless | More useless | The most useless |



THREE SYLLABLE ADJECTIVES

- Adjectives which have three or more syllables always form the comparative and superlative with **MORE** and **THE MOST**, e.g.:

| Adjective | Comparative | Superlative |
|-----------|----------------|--------------------|
| Dangerous | More dangerous | The most dangerous |
| Difficult | More difficult | The most difficult |

- The only exceptions are some three syllable adjectives which have been formed by adding the prefix -un to another adjective, especially those formed from an adjective ending in -y. These adjectives can form comparatives and superlatives by using more/most or adding -er/-est, e.g.:
unhappy - unhappier - the unhappiest/ the most unhappy



IRREGULAR ADJECTIVES

| Adjective | Comparative | Superlative |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Good | Better | The best |
| Bad | Worse | The worst |
| Far | Farther/further | The farthest/furthest |



USE OF COMPARATIVES

- Comparatives are very commonly followed by **than** and a pronoun or noun group, in order to describe who the other person or thing involved in the comparison is, e.g.:
- John is taller than me.
- I think that she's more intelligent than her sister.



OTHER USES OF COMPARATIVES



- Comparatives are often qualified by using words and phrases such as much, a lot, far, a bit/little, slightly etc., e.g.:

You should go by train, it would be much cheaper.

Could you be a bit quieter?

I'm feeling a lot better.

Do you have one that's slightly bigger?

- Two comparatives can be contrasted by placing **the** before them, indicating that a change in one quality is linked to a change in another, e.g.:

The smaller the gift, the easier it is to send.

The more stressed you are, the worse it is for your health.

- Two comparatives can also be linked with and to show a continuing increase in a particular quality, e.g.:
 - The sea was getting rougher and rougher.
 - Her illness was becoming worse and worse.
 - He became more and more tired as the weeks went by



USE OF SUPERLATIVES

- Like comparatives, superlatives can be placed before nouns in the attributive position, or occur after be and other link verbs, e.g.:
 - the most delicious chocolate cake I've ever eaten
 - Annabel was the youngest
 - This restaurant is the best
- As shown in the second two examples, superlatives are often used on their own if it is clear what or who is being compared. If you want to be specific about what you are comparing, you can do this with a noun, or a phrase beginning with **in** or **of**, e.g.:
 - Annabel was the youngest child
 - Annabel was the youngest of the children
 - This restaurant is the best in town.



THE OPPOSITES OF COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVES



- we use the forms **less** (the opposite of comparative more), and **the least** (the opposite of superlative the most).
 - **Less** is used to indicate that something or someone does not have as much of a particular quality as someone or something else, e.g.:
 - This sofa is less comfortable.
 - I've always been less patient than my sister.
 - **The least** is used to indicate that something or someone has less of a quality than any other person or thing of its kind, e.g.:
 - It's the least expensive way to travel.
 - She was the least intelligent of the three sisters.

