

Adjectives

An adjective is a describing word. It describes a **noun**, for example...

- a **long** road
- a **green** plant
- **neat** writing.

Adjectives can help to communicate an image or idea to your reader. Adjectives with similar meanings can create different effects, for example...

- thin, slim, skinny, slender.

A 'skinny girl' does not have the same meaning as a 'slender girl'.

Other examples of adjectives with similar meanings include...

- old, antique, ancient, elderly
- red, crimson, scarlet, rosy
- big, huge, enormous
- sleepy, tired, exhausted.

Adjectives can make a big difference to a piece of writing. Try to choose interesting adjectives instead of ones which are used every day. Which of the following descriptive sentences do you think is the most effective?

- We had some nice bread.
- We had some warm, freshly baked bread.

Try putting two or three adjectives together, for example, 'The slender young girl.' But do not do this too often, or your work will become difficult to read.

Using a **thesaurus** can help you to find effective adjectives.

Comparatives and Superlatives

An adjective can become a **comparative**, usually by adding **-er** to the end. A comparative is used to describe something by comparing it with something else, e.g. big → bigger.

An adjective can be changed to a **superlative**, usually by adding **-est** to the end. A superlative is used to describe something to the highest or lowest degree, e.g. big → biggest.

The table below shows how adjectives can become comparatives and superlatives. Note that the endings of some adjectives change when **-er** and **-est** are added. Some comparatives and superlatives are completely different words.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
small	smaller	smallest
cold	colder	coldest
funny	funnier	funniest
good	better	best
bad	worse	worst
many	more	most

For longer adjectives, the comparative and superlative are formed by adding an extra word: more and most.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
delicious	more delicious	most delicious
beautiful	more beautiful	most beautiful

warm,
freshly baked
bread

