

Using Adjectives and Adverbs

- What do adjectives and adverbs do?

An **adjective** is a word used to modify (describe) a noun or a pronoun.

An **adverb** is a word used to modify (describe) a verb, an adjective, another adverb, a phrase, a clause, or a sentence.

Because the definition of an **adverb** is often more confusing than helpful, let's look at some basic characteristics.

-An **adverb** often ends in **ly**.

He ran **quickly**.

She worked **enthusiastically**.

-**Not all** adverbs end in **ly**.

An **adverb** indicating **time** like "soon" does **not** end in **ly**.

An **adverb** indicating **position** such as "nearby" does **not** end in **ly**.

An **adverb** indicating **to what extent** like "almost" does **not** end in **ly**.

An important thing to remember is that adjectives work only with nouns and pronouns, while adverbs work with anything other than nouns and pronouns.

Incorrect: The student is a **quietly** reader.

Correct: The student is a **quiet** reader.

Explanation: Because "quiet" describes the noun "reader," the "ly" ending of the adverb is not appropriate.

Incorrect: The first attempt failed bad.

Correct: The first attempt failed badly.

Explanation: Because "badly" describes the verb "failed," the "ly" ending of the adverb is needed.

- What is meant by the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs? How are they formed?

When you are comparing **two** items or qualities, use the **comparative** form of the adverb or adjective.

To form the **comparative** of a **one syllable** adjective or adverb, add "**er**".

To form the **comparative** of an adjective or adverb with **two or more syllables**, add the word "**more**".

To indicate a lesser degree, add the word "**less**".

When you are comparing **more than two** items or qualities, use the **superlative** form of the adverb or adjective.

To form the **superlative** of a **one (or sometimes two) syllable** adjective or adverb, add the "**est**" suffix.

To form the **superlative** of an adjective or adverb with **two or more syllables**, add the word "**most**".

To indicate the lesser degree, add the word "**least**".

FYI: Never use "more" and the "er" suffix simultaneously. Never use "most" and the "est" suffix simultaneously. **This is called a double comparison.**

Incorrect: He is the most smartest student in our class.

Correct: He is the smartest student in our class.

REGULAR COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

Comparative	2 qualities or items	bigger	more excited
Superlative	3 or more qualities or items	biggest	most excited

IRREGULAR COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

bad	worse	worst
a little	less	least
many, some, much	more	most
well	better	best
good	better	best

- The Double Negative

The **double negative** is formed when two negatives (*no, not, none, never, no one, nothing, hardly, scarcely*) are used in the same sentence. According to *Warriner's English Grammar and Composition*, "negative statements in standard English [English used in academic or formal settings] require only one negative word."

Practice Exercises:

Select the appropriate adjective or adverb.

1. The student is the (tallest, most tallest) player on the team.
2. Soon the troops were marching (more faster, faster) than they had previously.
3. I (can't hardly, can hardly) believe that it is really you!
4. The violinist plays (good, well).
5. Which of the two pieces of pottery is the (older, oldest)?
6. She is (more stronger, stronger) than he.
7. The goalie (has no, hasn't no) excuse.
8. He piloted the craft (skillful, skillfully).
9. The instructor felt (worse, worst) than he did yesterday.
10. Among all of us, she is the (wisest, wiser).

Answers: 1) tallest 2) faster 3) can hardly 4) well 5) older 6) stronger 7) has no 8) skillfully 9) worse 10) wisest