**Oliver:** Hey, Kim. This bag’s getting heavier and heavier! I’ve just been to the new supermarket and it’s a long walk but the food’s cheaper than at the one I used to shop at before.

**Kim:** Oh yeah, I’ve been there myself, but I don’t agree with you actually. The cheese and some of the biscuits are more expensive there.

**Oliver:** You may be right, but you get a wider range in the new one and the food’s fresher because they have a quicker turnover. Must be because its location is more central.

---

**Ex 1.** Now it’s your turn to spot the comparatives found in this text. Highlight or underline all those that you manage to find.

Brian and Jeff are twin brothers. They look similar but there are some big differences. Brian is slightly taller than Jeff. Brian is also slimmer than Jeff. Jeff’s hair is darker and curlier than Brian’s. Jeff is more athletic, spends more time outside, and is more tanned than Brian. The twins also have different personalities. Jeff is more outgoing than Brian, while Brian is quieter and more reserved. Brian is more intellectual and loves reading. He is also more artistic than Jeff is. Brian loves painting and drawing. Jeff is much funnier and is definitely the clown of the family.
SOME NOTES

As we’ve already seen, when an adjective is short (one syllable) we usually make the comparative form by putting *er* or *r* at the end:

\[ \text{careful} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{more careful} \quad \& \quad \text{unsure} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{more unsure} \]

(Write your own two examples above)

However, when an adjective is long (three syllables or more) we usually put *more* before it:

\[ \text{Your jacket is much} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{bigger} \quad \& \quad \text{Andrea is much} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{thinner} \]

(Again, write your own two examples)

VERY IMPORTANT!

If an adjective has two syllables, it follows one or the other of these above-mentioned rules. As a guide,

- two-syllable adjectives ending in *ful, ing* or *re* usually take *more*:
  - careful > more careful  \&  unsure > more unsure

- two-syllable adjectives ending in *er, ow, le* or *y* usually add *er*:
  - clever > cleverer  \&  shallow > shallower

Also note that adjectives ending with a single vowel before a consonant double the consonant before adding *er*:

Your jacket is much **bigger** than mine.
Andrea is much **thinner** than Marcus  \quad OR  
Marcus is much **fatter** than Andrea.

Exceptions

As with other grammar points, and since language is a living thing, there are some rebels who want to be different! Some special irregular comparatives which you should be aware of.

\[
\begin{align*}
good & > \text{better} \\
bad & > \text{worse} \\
\text{far} & > \text{farther/further} \\
much & \quad \{ \quad \text{more}
\end{align*}
\]
Ex 3. Write a comparative sentence using the information and an adjective from the list. Make any necessary changes, leaving out any unnecessary detail. Try matching the adjectives with the sentences first, to save yourself some effort.

- **deep**
- **dry**
- **high**
- **large**
- **long**
- **low**
- **old**
- **small**

The River Mackenzie, Canada, 4,240km  
The River Niger, Africa: 4,170km

Lake Victoria, Africa: 69,484 km²  
Lake Michigan, North America: 57,757 km²

The Marianas Trench, Pacific Ocean: 10,900 m  
The Japan Trench, Northern Pacific: 9,000 m

Mont Blanc, France: 4,807 m  
Mount Elbrus, Russia: 5,642 m

Arica, Chile: average rainfall 0.76 mm per year  
The Ubyan Sahara Desert: average rainfall, less than 15 mm per year

The oldest rocks in Scotland: 3 billion years old  
The oldest rocks in Canada: 4 billion years old

The lowest recorded temperature in Finland: -57°C  
The lowest recorded temperature in Sweden: -52°C

Area of the island state of Nauru, South Pacific: 21 km²  
Area of Monaco: 1.6 km²
Ex 4. Rewrite the underlined part of the sentence, using the comparative form of an adverb in the following list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>easy</th>
<th>fast</th>
<th>hard</th>
<th>heavy</th>
<th>long</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>slow</th>
<th>well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

a. When you tell a lie, your brain has to work more. harder

b. If you cut your hair a lot it won’t grow at an increased speed.

c. Acts of forgetting occur with increased frequency as people get older.

b. Goats’ milk is digested with less difficulty than cows’ milk

d. Same crystals grow at a lower speed in space.

e. People may live for a greater number of years by eating less.

g. People drive with more skill along tree-lined streets.

h. As a low weather front approaches, it starts to drizzle and then rains a lot as a warm front approaches.

Ex 5. Complete each sentence with a suitable form of an adverb from the list. After this, decide if each fact is true or false. Check the factual answers with your teacher.

carefully heavily clearly early quickly
easily loudly fast slowly quietly

a. Students who use green pens write ……………………… .

b. Eagles awake ……………………… than any other birds.

c. Eating ……………………… does not reduce your appetite.

d. Brazil’s Amazon rainforest is disappearing ……………………… than scientists previously estimated.

e. The Earth vibrates and makes a humming noise, and does this ……………………… in the afternoon.

f. Hot water can in fact freeze ……………………… than cold water.

g. Most younger people think ……………………… in the afternoon.

h. Teenagers are drinking alcohol earlier and ……………………… than ever before.

i. Bird flu spreads to humans ……………………… than we had thought before.

j. Scientists believe that humans speak ……………………… now than 250 years ago.
Jonah recently moved to a new school. He likes it better than his old school. In fact it’s the best school he’s ever been to. The teachers are the nicest and most helpful he’s ever had. The classrooms are the biggest and cleanest he’s ever seen. Every classroom has at least three computers in it. The library is also really amazing! There are tons of great books, magazines and movies. The library has the most comfortable couches that students can sit in while they read. The cafeteria food is the most delicious he’s ever eaten anywhere. Their spaghetti is Jonah’s favourite dish. The students at his new school are the friendliest he’s ever met. Jonah has already made many new friends. His new school is also very well known for high achievement. The track team is the fastest in the city and they have won many competitions. The school band is the most talented in the city. They were even invited to play with the city orchestra. Jonah’s absolute favourite thing about his new school is the big auditorium, where the students can watch plays and listen to concerts. Last week they watched the funniest play Jonah had ever seen.

Jonah is so happy he moved to this school.
**RULES**

The 2 rules for forming the superlative are related to those for the comparative.

- Adjectives which take *er*/*ir* in the comparative take *est* in the superlative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fast</td>
<td>faster</td>
<td>the fastest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Write your own two examples above)

- Adjectives which take *more* in the comparative take *most* in the superlative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Again, write your own two examples)

**Contrast the following …**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Adjectives</th>
<th>Longer Adjectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>warm &gt; the warmest</td>
<td>difficult &gt; the most difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old &gt; the oldest</td>
<td>hurtful &gt; the most hurtful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tall &gt; the tallest</td>
<td>boring &gt; the most boring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:  
The longest day of the year is in June.  
The most interesting way to travel is by train.  
The happiest time of my life was my childhood.

**Exceptions to the Rule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>far</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many/much</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ex 3. Complete the sentence with the superlative form of the adjective in capitals.

a. Thumbelina, a miniature sorrel brown mare won the title of ...................... living horse in July 2006, standing at just 44.5cm high. (TINY)

b. The ......................... whale recorded was over 33m in length. (LONG)

c. A specimen of king’s holly, a plant found in the rainforest of Tasmania, is one of the ......................... plants on Earth - over 43,000 years old. (OLD)

d. The cheetah is the ......................... creature on Earth, capable of running at over 110kph. (FAT)

e. The ......................... part of the ocean where a fish has been found was 8,372m down in the Puerto Rican Trench. (DEEP)

f. The ......................... fish in the sea is the sailfish, which can travel 100kph. (SPEEDY)

g. No prizes for guessing the world’s ......................... fish: it is the deadly piranha fish. (FEROCIOUS)

h. The sea wasp, which lives off the north coast of Australia, is the ......................... creature in the sea. If it stings you, you have only between 30 seconds and 4 minutes to live. (POISONOUS)

i. The ......................... spider in the world is the goliath spider from South America, which can be 28cm across. (LARGE)

j. And the ......................... mammal is probably Savi’s pygmy shrew, a mouse-like creature which weighs between 1 and 3 grams. (SMALL)

k. The ......................... whale ever caught weighed more than 171,000kg. (HEAVY)