

Better or worse, that will all turn out for
the better!

The comparative form is **-er** or **more ...** .

We use **-er** for short words (one syllable):

cheap → cheaper **fast** → faster
large → larger **thin** → thinner

We also use **-er** for two-syllable words that end in **-y** (**-y** → **ier**):

lucky → luckier **early** → earlier
easy → easier **pretty** → prettier

For spelling, see Appendix 6.

We use **more ...** for longer words (two syllables or more):

more serious **more often**
more expensive **more comfortable**

We also use **more ...** for adverbs that end in **-ly**:

more slowly **more seriously**
more quietly **more carefully**

Compare these examples:

- You're **older** than me.
- The exam was fairly easy – **easier** than I expected.
- Can you walk a bit **faster**?
- I'd like to have a **bigger** car.
- Last night I went to bed **earlier** than usual.

- You're **more patient** than me.
- The exam was quite difficult – **more difficult** than I expected.
- Can you walk a bit **more slowly**?
- I'd like to have a **more reliable** car.
- I don't play tennis **much these days**.
I used to play **more often**.

Adjective <i>alone</i>	Positive Degree	Comparative Degree	Superlative Degree
Good	As good as	Better than	The best
Well	As well as *)	Better than	The best
Bad	As bad as	Worse than	The worst
Mad	As mad as	Worse than	The worst
Far	As far as	Farther than	The farthest
Far	As far as	Futher than	The furthest
Little	As little as	Less than	The least
Many	As many as	More than	The most
Much	As much as	More than	The most
Late	As late as	Latter than	The latest
Near	As near as	Nearer than	The next
Old	As old as	Older than	The oldest / The eldest

You can use *-er* or *more ...* with some two-syllable adjectives, especially:

clever narrow quiet shallow simple

- It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere **quieter** / **more quiet**?

A few adjectives and adverbs have irregular comparative forms:

good/well → **better**

- The garden looks **better** since you tidied it up.
- I know him **well** – probably **better** than anybody else knows him.

bad/badly → **worse**:

- 'How is your headache? Better?' 'No, it's **worse**.'
- He did very **badly** in the exam – **worse** than expected.

far → **further** (*or farther*):

- It's a long walk from here to the park – **further** than I thought. (*or farther* than)

Further (*but not farther*) can also mean 'more' or 'additional':

- Let me know if you hear any **further** news. (= any more news)

Complete the sentences using a comparative form (older / more important etc.).

- 1 It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere quieter ?
- 2 This coffee is very weak. I like it a bit
- 3 The hotel was surprisingly big. I expected it to be
- 4 The hotel was surprisingly cheap. I expected it to be
- 5 The weather is too cold here. I'd like to live somewhere
- 6 My job is a bit boring sometimes. I'd like to do something
- 7 It's a pity you live so far away. I wish you lived

3 Read the situations and complete the sentences. Use a comparative form (-er or more ...).

1 Yesterday the temperature was six degrees. Today it's only three degrees.

It's colder today than it was yesterday.

2 The journey takes four hours by car and five hours by train.

It takes

3 Dave and I went for a run. I ran ten kilometres. Dave stopped after eight kilometres.

I ran

Positive		Comparative		Superlative
Beautiful		1)		The most beautiful
Cheeky		2)		The cheekiest
Fabulous		More fabulous		3)
Ostentatious		4)		5)
Omnipotent		6)		7)
Gutsy		Gutsier		8)
Shallow		9)		More shallow