

Adjectives – comparative form (continuation)

Comparative is the form of an adjective that is usually used to indicate more of a particular quality. Look at the following example: *HighFly is more refreshing than other energy drinks.* In other words, all energy drinks are refreshing, but HighFly is even more refreshing. You will notice that the word *more* itself is added to adjectives of three or more syllables in order to form their comparative.

For more details about how to form comparative adjectives, take a look at the lesson about comparative previously posted on this site. This lesson will focus on different ways of expressing comparison. Let us first look at some examples of the most frequently used comparative form.

A new study suggests that palm oil is *healthier than* any other vegetable oil.
Going to work by car nowadays is *more time-consuming than* it used to be.

Both sentences can be paraphrased using the word *less* instead of *more*, which is a quantifier meaning not as great in amount or degree. However, when using the quantifier *less*, one- or two-syllable adjectives that normally receive the *-er* suffix remain in their original form.

A new study suggests that all vegetable oils are *less healthy than* palm oil.
Going to work by car used to be *less time-consuming than* it is nowadays.

A Paraphrase the following sentences in the same way, by substituting *more* with *less*.

1. The Sales Department recently moved into a much *larger office than* they had previously had.
2. Laptop users are *more demanding than* desktop users.
3. The new shopping centre is *cheaper than* the one in Brighton Street.
4. Express delivery is a *faster delivery service than* standard delivery.
5. Protecting reputation has become infinitely *more challenging* in the past five years.

Key: 1. The office that the Sales Department had previously had was less large than the one they moved into recently., 2. Desktop users are less demanding than laptop users., 3. The shopping centre in Brighton Street is less cheap than the new shopping centre., 4. Standard delivery is less fast than express delivery., 5. Five years ago, protecting reputation was infinitely less challenging than it is today.

We use the pattern with *the* and comparative to say that a change in one thing goes with a change in another.

Example: *The more* we know about your company, *the faster* we can find the best consultant for you.

With this membership card, *the more* you book, *the cheaper* the price.

B Complete the sentences with the phrase *the more* and *the* plus the comparative form of one of the following adjectives: *long, big, interested, effective, high*.

1. _____ your office will be, _____ staff will be needed.
2. _____ the taxes placed on income are, _____ people lose their incentives to earn more taxable income.

3. _____ he waited, _____ impatient he became.
4. _____ you learn to use your strengths, _____ they become.
5. _____ they use the system, _____ they become in using it.

Key: 1. the bigger...the more, 2. the higher...the more, 3. the longer...the more, 4. the more...the more effective, 5. the more...the more interested

When we want to express a continuing or gradual increase or decrease, we can use two comparatives joined by *and*.

Example: This research is getting *more and more interesting*.

As beer is constantly being sold at *cheaper and cheaper* prices, breweries are under increasing pressure to deliver the product at minimum cost without compromising quality.

C Complete the following sentences using twice the comparative form of the adjective in brackets.

1. Films are getting _____ (expensive) to distribute.
2. In today's economy, it's getting _____ (hard) to find a job.
3. As the date of the interview draws nearer, you start to feel _____ (nervous).
4. Your ability to read, speak and understand English will get _____ (good) over time.
5. We had a positive net income last year as the costs associated with the financial disaster of 2010 are becoming _____ (far) in the past.

Key: 1. more and more expensive, 2. harder and harder, 3. more and more nervous, 4. better and better, 5. further and further