

## Adjectives – comparative form

Sometimes in order to assess the quality of a product or service, we need to compare them either with a suitable benchmark or with similar products and services on the market. Using the comparison can help businesses improve their performance, running more efficiently and effectively.

From a grammatical point of view, there are some rules governing the formation of the comparative form of an adjective and its use in a sentence.

Let us first look at the rules for forming comparative adjectives in English.

- For one-syllable adjectives simply add the *-er* suffix: *high – higher, fast – faster*
- For one-syllable adjectives spelled with a final *e* preceded by a consonant, remove the *e* and then add the *-er* suffix: *fine – finer, wide – wider*
- For one-syllable adjectives spelled with a final consonant preceded by a single vowel, double the final consonant and add the *-er* suffix: *big – bigger, hot – hotter*
- For one- or two-syllable adjectives spelled with a final *y* preceded by a consonant, change the *y* into *i* and then add the *-er* suffix: *heavy – heavier, easy – easier*
- For adjectives with three syllables or more, add *more* before the adjective: *refreshing – more refreshing, attractive – more attractive*

Comparative adjectives compare two things, and therefore frequently the word *than* accompanies the comparative but not always. If the second thing which is compared is mentioned, we put *than* before it: *Organic food is more expensive than conventional food.*

Some adjectives have irregular comparative forms:

good	better
well (healthy)	better
bad	worse
far (distance)	farther
far (distance & other meanings)	further
old (general use)	older
old (people in the family)	elder
little (quantity)	less
little (size)	smaller

Complete the sentences with one of the following adjectives in their comparative form: *high, fast, refreshing, tough, old, efficient, safe, good, careful, low*.

1. This drink is \_\_\_\_\_ than most other energy drinks.
2. Flying is \_\_\_\_\_ than driving because airplanes crash much less often than cars do.
3. Benchmarking is a process by which a business systematically measures itself against a \_\_\_\_\_ business.
4. Three-star hotel prices are \_\_\_\_\_ in Birmingham than anywhere else in the UK.
5. He ran the company with this \_\_\_\_\_ brother until they fell out and went into business on their own account.
6. The graduates entering the job market this month can expect to face \_\_\_\_\_ competition than last year.

7. Competitive price is a price \_\_\_\_\_ than that offered by the competitors.
8. Our service at lunchtime is usually \_\_\_\_\_ than at a sit-down restaurant.
9. Generally speaking, the private sector is \_\_\_\_\_ than the public sector.
10. The revised guidelines should pay \_\_\_\_\_ attention to the licensing terms.

*Key: 1. more refreshing, 2. safer, 3. better, 4. higher, 5. elder, 6. tougher, 7. lower, 8. faster, 9. more efficient, 10. more careful*