

Comparison 1 (cheaper, more expensive etc.)

A

Study these examples:

How shall we travel? By car or by train?

Let's go by car. It's cheaper.

Don't go by train. It's more expensive.

Cheaper and more expensive are *comparative* forms.

After comparatives you can use **than** (see Unit 107):

- ☐ It's cheaper to go by car **than** by train.
- ☐ Going by train is **more expensive than** going by car.

B

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:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> You're older than me. | <input type="checkbox"/> You're more patient than me. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The exam was fairly easy – easier than I expected. | <input type="checkbox"/> The exam was quite difficult – more difficult than I expected. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Can you walk a bit faster ? | <input type="checkbox"/> Can you walk a bit more slowly ? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to have a bigger car. | <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to have a more reliable car. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Last night I went to bed earlier than usual. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't play tennis much these days. I used to play more often . |

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**?

C

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)

Exercises

Unit 105

105.1 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
- 8 I was surprised how easy it was to use the computer. I thought it would be
- 9 Your work isn't very good. I'm sure you can do
- 10 Don't worry. The situation isn't so bad. It could be
- 11 I was surprised we got here so quickly. I expected the journey to take
- 12 You're talking very loudly. Can you speak a bit ?
- 13 You hardly ever phone me. Why don't you phone me ?
- 14 You're standing too near the camera. Can you move a bit away?
- 15 You were a bit depressed yesterday, but you look today.

105.2 Complete the sentences. Each time use the comparative form of one of the words in the box. Use *than* where necessary.

| | | | | | |
|------------|----------|---------------------|---------|--------|-----------|
| big | crowded | early | easily | high | important |
| interested | peaceful | reliable | serious | simple | thin |

- 1 I was feeling tired last night, so I went to bed earlier than usual.
- 2 I'd like to have a more reliable car. The one I've got keeps breaking down.
- 3 Unfortunately her illness was we thought at first.
- 4 You look Have you lost weight?
- 5 I want a flat. We don't have enough space here.
- 6 He doesn't study very hard. He's in having a good time.
- 7 Health and happiness are money.
- 8 The instructions were very complicated. They could have been
- 9 There were a lot of people on the bus. It was usual.
- 10 I like living in the countryside. It's living in a town.
- 11 You'll find your way around the town if you have a good map.
- 12 In some parts of the country, prices are in others.

105.3 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
- 4 Chris and Joe both did badly in the test. Chris got 30%, but Joe only got 25%.
Joe did
- 5 I expected my friends to arrive at about 4 o'clock. In fact they arrived at 2.30.
My friends
- 6 You can go by bus or by train. The buses run every 30 minutes. The trains run every hour.
The buses
- 7 We were very busy at work today. We're not usually as busy as that.
We

Comparison 2 (much better / any better / better and better / the sooner the better)

A

Before comparatives you can use:

much a lot far (= a lot) a bit a little slightly (= a little)

- ☐ Let's go by car. It's **much** cheaper. (*or a lot cheaper*)
- ☐ 'How do you feel?' '**Much** better, thanks.'
- ☐ Don't go by train. It's **a lot more** expensive. (*or much more expensive*)
- ☐ Could you speak **a bit more** slowly? (*or a little more slowly*)
- ☐ This bag is **slightly** heavier than the other one.
- ☐ Her illness was **far more** serious than we thought at first. (*or much more serious / a lot more serious*)

B

You can use **any** and **no** + comparative (**any longer** / **no bigger** etc.):

- ☐ I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting **any longer**. (= not even a little longer)
- ☐ We expected their house to be very big, but it's **no bigger** than ours. *or* ... it isn't **any bigger** than ours. (= not even a little bigger)
- ☐ How do you feel now? Do you feel **any better**?
- ☐ This hotel is better than the other one, and it's **no more** expensive.

C

Better and better / more and more etc.

We repeat comparatives (**better and better** etc.) to say that something changes continuously:

- ☐ Your English is improving. It's getting **better and better**.
- ☐ The city is growing fast. It's getting **bigger and bigger**.
- ☐ Cathy got **more and more** bored in her job. In the end she left.
- ☐ These days **more and more** people are learning English.

D

The ... the ...

You can say **the** (sooner/bigger/more etc.) **the better**:

- ☐ 'What time shall we leave?' '**The sooner the better**.' (= as soon as possible)
- ☐ A: What sort of box do you want? A big one?
B: Yes, **the bigger the better**. (= as big as possible)
- ☐ When you're travelling, **the less luggage you have the better**.

We also use **the ... the ...** to say that one thing depends on another thing:

- ☐ **The warmer the weather, the better** I feel. (= if the weather is warmer, I feel better)
- ☐ **The sooner we leave, the earlier** we will arrive.
- ☐ **The younger you are, the easier** it is to learn.
- ☐ **The more expensive the hotel, the better** the service.
- ☐ **The more electricity you use, the higher** your bill will be.
- ☐ **The more I thought about the plan, the less** I liked it.

E

Older and elder

The comparative of old is **older**:

- ☐ David looks **older** than he really is.

You can use **elder** (*or older*) when you talk about people in a family. You can say (*my/your* etc.) **elder sister/brother/daughter/son**:

- ☐ My **elder** sister is a TV producer. (*or My older sister ...*)

We say 'my elder sister', but we do not say that 'somebody is elder':

- ☐ My sister is **older** than me. (*not elder than me*)

Any/no → Unit 86 Comparison 1, 3 → Units 105, 107 Eldest → Unit 108D

Even + comparative → Unit 112C

Exercises

Unit 106

106.1 Use the words in brackets to complete the sentences. Use **much / a bit etc. + a comparative form**. Use **than** where necessary.

- Her illness was much more serious than we thought at first. (much / serious)
- This bag is too small. I need something (much / big)
- I'm afraid the problem is it seems. (much / complicated)
- It was very hot yesterday. Today it's (a bit / cool)
- I enjoyed our visit to the museum. It was I expected. (far / interesting)
- You're driving too fast. Can you drive ? (a bit / slowly)
- It's to learn a foreign language in a country where it is spoken. (a lot / easy)
- I thought she was younger than me, but in fact she's (slightly / old)

106.2 Complete the sentences using **any/no + comparative**. Use **than** where necessary.

- I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting any longer.
- I'm sorry I'm a bit late, but I couldn't get here
- This shop isn't expensive. The prices are anywhere else.
- I need to stop for a rest. I can't walk
- The traffic isn't particularly bad today. It's usual.

106.3 Complete the sentences using the structure in Section C (... and ...).

- Cathy got more and more bored in her job. In the end she left. (bored)
- That hole in your sweater is getting (big)
- My bags seemed to get as I carried them. (heavy)
- As I waited for my interview, I became (nervous)
- As the day went on, the weather got (bad)
- Health care is becoming (expensive)
- Since Anna went to Canada, her English has got (good)
- As the conversation went on, Paul became (talkative)

106.4 These sentences are like those in Section D. Use the words in brackets (in the correct form) to complete the sentences.

- I like warm weather.
The warmer the weather, the better I feel. (feel)
- I didn't really like him when we first met.
But the more I got to know him, (like)
- If you're in business, you want to make a profit.
The more goods you sell, (profit)
- It's hard to concentrate when you're tired.
The more tired you are, (hard)
- Kate had to wait a very long time.
The longer she waited, (impatient / become)

106.5 Which is correct, **older** or **elder**? Or both of them?

- My older / elder sister is a TV producer. (older and elder are both correct)
- I'm surprised Diane is only 25. I thought she was older / elder.
- Jane's younger sister is still at school. Her older / elder sister is a nurse.
- Martin is older / elder than his brother.

Comparison 3 (as ... as / than)

A

Study this example situation:



Sarah, Joe and David are all very rich. Sarah has £20 million, Joe has £15 million and David has £10 million. So:

Joe is rich.
He is richer than David.
But he isn't as rich as Sarah.
(= Sarah is richer than he is)

Some more examples of **not as ... (as)**:

- ☐ Richard **isn't as old as** he looks. (= he looks **older than** he is)
- ☐ The town centre **wasn't as crowded as** usual. (= it is usually more crowded)
- ☐ Jenny **didn't do as well in** the exam as she had hoped. (= she had hoped to do better)
- ☐ The weather is better today. It's **not as cold**. (= yesterday was colder)
- ☐ I don't know **as many people as** you do. (= you know more people)
- ☐ 'How much did it cost? Fifty pounds?' 'No, **not as much as** that.' (= less than fifty pounds)

You can also say **not so ... (as)**:

- ☐ It's not warm, but it **isn't so cold as** yesterday. (= it isn't as cold as ...)

Less ... than is similar to **not as ... as**:

- ☐ I spent **less money than** you. (= I didn't spend as much money as you)
- ☐ The city centre was **less crowded than** usual. (= it **wasn't as** crowded as usual)

B

We also use **as ... as** (*but not so ... as*) in positive sentences and in questions:

- ☐ I'm sorry I'm late. I got here **as fast as** I could.
- ☐ There's plenty of food. You can have **as much as** you want.
- ☐ Let's walk. It's **just as quick as** taking the bus.
- ☐ Can you send me the money **as soon as possible**, please?

Also **twice as ... as**, **three times as ... as** etc. :

- ☐ Petrol is **twice as expensive as** it was a few years ago.
- ☐ Their house is about **three times as big as** ours.

C

We say **the same as** (*not the same like*):

- ☐ Laura's salary is **the same as** mine. *or* Laura gets **the same salary as** me.
- ☐ David is **the same age as** James.
- ☐ 'What would you like to drink?' 'I'll have **the same as** you.'

D

Than me / than I am etc.

You can say:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> You're taller than I am. (<i>not usually</i> You're taller than I) | <i>or</i> You're taller than me. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> He's not as clever as she is. | <i>or</i> He's not as clever as her . |
| <input type="checkbox"/> They have more money than we have. | <i>or</i> They have more money than us. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can't run as fast as he can. | <i>or</i> I can't run as fast as him . |

Exercises

Unit 107

107.1 Complete the sentences using as ... as.

- I'm quite tall, but you are taller. I'm not as tall as you.
- My salary is high, but yours is higher. My salary isn't
- You know a bit about cars, but I know more.
You don't
- It's still cold, but it was colder yesterday.
It isn't
- I still feel quite tired, but I felt a lot more tired yesterday.
I don't
- Our neighbours have lived here for quite a long time, but we've lived here longer.
Our neighbours haven't
- I was a bit nervous before the interview, but usually I'm a lot more nervous.
I wasn't

107.2 Write a new sentence with the same meaning.

- Richard is younger than he looks. Richard isn't as old as he looks.
- I didn't spend as much money as you. You spent more money than me.
- The station was nearer than I thought. The station wasn't
- The meal didn't cost as much as I expected. The meal cost
- I go out less than I used to. I don't
- Karen's hair isn't as long as it used to be. Karen used to
- I know them better than you do. You don't
- There are fewer people at this meeting than at the last one.
There aren't

107.3 Complete the sentences using as ... as + the following:

bad comfortable ~~fast~~ long often quietly soon well well-qualified

- I'm sorry I'm late. I got here as fast as I could.
- It was a difficult question. I answered it I could.
- 'How long can I stay with you?' 'You can stay you like.'
- I need the information quickly, so let me know possible.
- I like to keep fit, so I go swimming I can.
- I didn't want to wake anybody, so I came in I could.

In the following sentences use just as ... as.

- I'm going to sleep on the floor. It's the bed.
- Why did he get the job rather than me? I'm him.
- At first I thought he was nice, but really he's everybody else.

107.4 Write sentences using the same as.

- David and James are both 22 years old. David is the same age as James.
- You and I both have dark brown hair. Your hair
- I arrived at 10.25 and so did you. I
- My birthday is 5 April. Tom's birthday is 5 April too. My

107.5 Complete the sentences with than ... or as ...

- I can't reach as high as you. You are taller than me.
- He doesn't know much. I know more
- I don't work particularly hard. Most people work as hard
- We were very surprised. Nobody was more surprised
- She's not a very good player. I'm a better player
- They've been very lucky. I wish we were as lucky