



ADJECTIVES AND MODIFIERS

Week 12-14

WHAT IS AN ADJECTIVE

An ADJECTIVE is a word that gives information about a noun.

They can give two types of information.

What Kind:

We have a **large, black** dog. (use a coma to separate two adjectives)

The dog has **curly** hair.

How Many:

Two dogs played in the yard.

Many large dogs like children. (do not use a coma when one tells how many)

You can use more than one adjective to describe a noun.

ADJECTIVES AFTER *BE*

Adjectives also describe words like *I*, *it*, and *we* which take the place of a noun. The adjective can come after the noun especially following a form of the verb *be*.

The project is **ready**.

I am **excited**.

The weather is **beautiful**.

The egg is **large**.

These adjectives that follow a linking verb are called PREDICATE ADJECTIVES.

ARTICLES AND DEMONSTRATIVES

The words *a*, *an*, and *the* are special adjectives called ARTICLES.

Indefinite Articles are used for any noun.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Use <i>a</i> if the next word begins with a consonant sound | a flower |
| Use <i>an</i> if the next word begins with a vowel sound | an iris |

Definite Articles refer to a particular noun.

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Use <i>the</i> if the noun names a specific person, place, or thing | the garden |
| Use <i>the</i> with plural nouns | the flowers |

Demonstratives tell which one.

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Use <i>this</i> (singular) and <i>these</i> (plural) if the noun is close to the speaker | this trip these cats |
| Use <i>that</i> (singular) and <i>those</i> (plural) if the noun is farther away | that book those pens |

POSSESSIVE NOUNS

Possessive nouns can be adjectives as well as long as they describe a noun.

Mr. Gerry's son is an actor.

The theater's stage is deep.

The boy's love is theater.

Jean's play broke records.

These adjectives tell which noun and help the writer be specific.

MAKING COMPARISONS

When using adjectives with one syllable to compare two nouns add –er or –est when comparing three or more nouns.

| Rules for adding –er and –est. | Adjective | Degree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Adjectives ending with e: Drop the e before adding the ending. | wide wider widest | positive (basic) comparative superlative |
| Adjectives ending with a single vowel and consonant: Double the consonant and add the ending | thin thinner thinnest | positive (basic) comparative superlative |
| Adjectives ending with a consonant and y: Change the y to i before adding the ending | tiny tinier tiniest | positive (basic) comparative superlative |

COMPARING WITH MORE AND MOST / LESS AND LEAST

With adjectives that have two or more syllables you use the words more and most to make comparisons.

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| One | Tiger is a playful cat. |
| Two Comparative | Ginger is a more playful cat than Tiger. |
| Three or More Superlative | Ike is the most playful cat of all. |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| One | Tiger is a playful cat. |
| Two Comparative | Ginger is a less playful cat than Tiger. |
| Three or More Superlative | Ike is the least playful cat of all. |

COMPARING WITH GOOD AND BAD / WORSE AND WORST

The form of good and bad change when you make comparisons.

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| One | I found a good book in the library. |
| Two Comparative | It is better than the last book I read. |
| Three or More Superlative | What is the best book you have ever read? |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| One | I read a bad story last night. |
| Two Comparative | It was worse than the story we read yesterday. |
| Three or More Superlative | It may be the worst story I ever read. |

PROPER ADJECTIVES

An adjective formed from a proper noun is called a **PROPER ADJECTIVE**.

Proper noun: Those olives are from **Greece**.

Proper adjective: They are **Greek** olives.

| Proper Noun | Proper Adjective |
|---------------|---------------------|
| Italy | Italian cooking |
| Mexico | Mexican rug |
| Switzerland | Swiss watch |
| South America | South American bird |

When changing a proper noun to a proper adjective the most common endings are –ish (British), –an (Italian), –ese (Chinese).

ADVERBS

An ADVERB is a word that modifies a verb. They answer these questions:

How: Alma left **quickly**.

Where: She arrived **there**.

When: **Then** she returned.

Many adverbs end in -ly.

Adjectives and adverbs can modify another adjective or adverb by telling “to what extent.”

A **very** large crowd gathered **quite** early.

COMPARING WITH ADVERBS

You can use adverbs to make comparisons just like adjectives.

| Adverb | Comparative | Superlative |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| skillfully | more skillfully | most skillfully |
| frequently | more frequently | most frequently |
| heavily | more heavily | most heavily |

Do not combine the –er ending with the word more or the –est ending with the word most.

Incorrect: Lian rows more straighter than Dan.

Correct: Lian rows straighter than Dan.

NEGATIVES

Some modifiers mean “no” or “not” and are called a **NEGATIVE**. A negative can reverse the meaning of a sentence.

Sheldon is on the team.

Sheldon is **not** on the team.

The most common negatives are: no, none, not, no one, never, nothing, nowhere, nobody. The *n't* in a contraction is also a negative.

Never use two negatives in a sentence as this is called a **DOUBLE NEGATIVE** and it makes the sentence positive.

Incorrect: I can't find nothing to wear.

ADJECTIVE AND ADVERB CONFUSIONS

It is easy to confuse adjectives and adverbs. The best way to tell is that when an adjective and an adverb are similar, the adverb usually ends in *-ly*.

| Adjective | Adverb |
|-----------|---------|
| slow | slowly |
| quick | quickly |
| bad | badly |
| sweet | sweetly |

An adjective modifies a noun and an adverb modifies a verb.

Incorrect: We walked quick through the softly leaves.

Correct: We walked quickly through the soft leaves.

CONFUSING GOOD AND WELL

Good is an adjective, it modifies a noun.

It is a good day to take pictures.

She feels good about her work.

Well is usually an adverb and it modifies a verb.

I played baseball well today.

We do not say: I played baseball good today.

Well is only an adjective when it means “healthy.” I don’t feel well today.