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ADJECTIVES

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Parts of Speech

Words in English can be divided into different parts of speech. The part of speech indicates how the word functions in meaning as well as grammatically within the sentence. Here are some of these speech parts:

Parts of Speech	Definition	Examples
1. Noun	Names persons, places, things, ideas, or qualities.	Mary, bread, letter, van, car, teacher, student, cat, dog, wisdom, beauty,...
2. Pronoun	Replaces a noun that has already been mentioned.	He, she, it, they, we, you, I, him, her, them, us, his, this, that, our,...
3. Verb	A word that conveys action, a state of being, or existence.	Write, deliver, walk, see, look, sing, read, listen, go, come, eat,...
4. Adjective	Describes a noun or pronoun.	Hot, cold, new, old, rich, red, tall, fat, long, short, cheap, expensive, beautiful,...
5. Adverb	A word that modifies verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.	Quickly, slowly, always, soon, loudly, ever, never,...
6. Prepositions	Show relationships	In, on, at, about, to, from,...
7. Conjunctions	Words that link other words, phrases, or clauses in a sentence.	for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so, although, because, whether, while, ...
8. Interjections	Words that are used as exclamations or to express feeling.	Hey! Oh! Wow! ...

What are ADJECTIVES?

- ▶ **Adjectives** are **single words** (exciting, new, thorough) and **compounds** (hard-working, well-organized) that **modify nouns**. We can use them **before nouns** (*The **new** teacher has **exciting** ideas.*) or **after linking verbs** such as **be** and **seem** (*She's **hard-working** and her classes seem **thorough** and **well-organized**.*).
- ▶ An **adjective** modifies a noun or pronoun by **providing descriptive or specific detail**. Unlike adverbs, adjectives do not modify verbs, other adjectives, or adverbs. Adjectives usually **precede the noun or pronoun they modify**. Adjectives **do not have to agree in number or gender with the nouns they describe**. Adjectives answer the following questions: **What kind?, How many?, or Which ones?**
- ▶ **Examples:**
 - *Tom bought a **used** car.* (used describes what kind of car Tom bought.)
 - *Sally baked **ten** pies for the school bake sale.* (ten tells how many pies Sally baked.)
 - *Bob climbed **that** tree in the backyard.* (that specifies which tree Bob climbed.)

Position of ADJECTIVES

- ▶ We usually use adjectives before **nouns** or after a **linking verb**:
 - *I had an **amusing** experience. / They faced **enormous** challenges.*
 - *Don't be **silly**. / He seemed **anxious** and **upset**.*
- ▶ We use adjectives after **be/get/become/seem**:
 - ***Be careful!***
 - ***I'm tired** and **I'm getting hungry**.*
 - *As the film went on, it **became** more and more **boring**.*
 - *Your friend **seems** very **nice**.*
- ▶ We also use adjectives to say how somebody/something **looks, feels, sounds, tastes** or **smells**:
 - *You **look tired**. / I **feel tired**. / She **sounds tired**.*
 - *The dinner **smells good**.*
 - *This tea **tastes** a bit **strange**.*

Order of ADJECTIVES

- ▶ Sometimes we use two or more adjectives together:
 - *My brother lives in a **nice new** house.*
 - *In the kitchen there was a **beautiful large round wooden** table.*
- ▶ Adjectives like new/large/round/wooden are **fact adjectives**. They give us information about age, size, colour etc.
- ▶ Adjectives like nice/beautiful are **opinion adjectives**. They tell us what the speaker thinks of something or somebody.
- ▶ Opinion adjectives usually go **before** fact adjectives.

Examples: opinion fact

A **nice** **long** *summer holiday*

A **delicious** **hot** *vegetable soup*

A **beautiful** **large round wooden** *table*

- ▶ Try:
 - *University: grey, concrete, depressing?*
 - *Furniture: old, lovely?*

Order of ADJECTIVES

- Sometimes we use two or more fact adjectives together. Usually (not always) we put fact adjectives in this order:



- Examples:

- *An old Russian song*
- *A small black plastic bag*
- *Old red Spanish leather riding boots*

- Try:

- *Trunks: black, swimming, nylon?*
- *Shirt: white, old, cotton?*

- **First, next** and **last** usually come before numbers:

*The **first three** weeks / My **last two** holidays / The **next few** weeks*

ADJECTIVES ending in **-ing** and **-ed**

- ▶ Many adjectives end in **-ing** and **-ed**, for example: **boring** and **bored**.

Somebody is **bored** or gets **bored** if something (or somebody else) is **boring**.

If something is **boring**, you get **bored** with it. So:

- *Jane is **bored** because her job is **boring**.*
- *Jane's job is **boring**, so Jane is **bored**. (not Jane is boring)*

If a person is **boring**, this means that they make other people **bored**:

- *Paul always talks about the same things. He's really **boring**.*

- ▶ Compare adjectives ending in **-ing** and **-ed**:

- My job is { **boring**
interesting
tiring
satisfying
depressing (etc.)

In these examples, the **-ing** adjective tells you about the job

- I'm **bored** with my job.
- I'm not **interested** in my job any more.
- I get very **tired** doing my job.
- I'm not **satisfied** with my job.
- My job makes me **depressed**. (etc.)

In these examples, the **-ed** adjective tells you how somebody feels (about the job).

ADJECTIVES without Nouns

- ▶ We can use **the + adjective** (without a noun) to talk about some **social groups**:
the young ; the old ; the rich ; the poor ; the sick ; the disabled ; the blind ; the deaf ; the mentally ill ; the homeless ; the unemployed ; the dead
- ▶ These expressions are **plural**; *the blind* means '*the blind people*'. Compare:
 - *I'm collecting money for **the blind**.*
 - *Do you know **the blind person** next door?* (NOT ... ~~the blind next door~~)
 - *I met **a blind man** on the train.* (NOT ... ~~a blind...~~)
- ▶ The structure is also used with the following adjectives for nationalities: **Dutch, English, French, Irish, Spanish, Welsh**.
 - ***The Welsh** have a very old literary tradition.*
 - BUT: *I like **the Welshman** who works in the garage.* (NOT ... ~~the Welsh...~~)
- ▶ **NOTE:** This structure is not used with other adjectives for nationalities; instead, we use plural nouns:
 - ***The Brazilians** speak Portuguese.* (NOT ~~The Brazilian...~~)

Comparison

- ▶ We can compare people and things with each other using **as ... as**, **-er than** or **more ... than**:
 - *You're **as silly as** me.*
 - *Luke's **younger** than me.*
 - *The second problem much **more difficult** than the other three.*
- ▶ We can use **the -est** or **the most** to compare people and things with all their group:
 - *Carl is **the fastest** of the young sprinters.*
 - *Romana is **the most sociable** person in the class.*
- ▶ We use **-er** and **-est** with shorter adjectives and some short adverbs. We use **more** and **most** with other adjectives and adverbs.

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

► To make the comparative and superlative of:

► **One-syllable adjective ending in –e , add –r, –st:** *late; later ; latest*

► **Other one-syllable adjectives, add –er, -est:** *fast; faster ; fastest*

► **Two-syllable adjectives ending in –y, change y to i and add –er, -est:**

happy; happier ; happiest

► **Other two-syllable adjectives, put more and most in front:** *distant; more/most distant*

► **Longer adjectives, put more and most in front:** *intelligent; more/most intelligent*

► **Before –er and –est, we double the last letter of adjectives that end in one vowel + one consonant:** *big; bigger ; biggest • hot; hotter ; hottest*

► **A few words have irregular comparatives and superlatives.**

good; better; best • bad; worse; worst • far; farther/further; farthest/furthest • little; less; least • much/many; more; most • old; older/elder; oldest/eldest

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

- ▶ We use a **comparative** (with than) to compare one person, thing, action or group with another person, thing etc.
- ▶ We use a **superlative** to compare one person, thing etc. with the whole group that he/she/it belongs to.
- ▶ Examples:
 - *Mary is **taller than** her three sisters.* • *Mary is **the tallest** of the four girls.*
 - *Your accent is **worse than** mine.* • *Your accent is **the worst** in the class.*
- ▶ Before a superlative we normally use **the** or **a possessive**:
 - ***the best** singer ;*
 - ***my eldest** brother ;*
 - ***John's most attractive** quality*

More on Comparatives and Superlatives

- ▶ We can use **double comparatives** to say that **things are changing**. We repeat **comparatives** (better and better etc.) to say that something **changes continuously**:
 - *Your English is improving. It's getting **better and better**.*
 - ***More and more** tourists are visiting this part of the country.*

- ▶ **the ... the ...**

You can say ***the sooner the better, the more the better*** etc. :

- *A: What time shall we leave? B: **The sooner the better.** (= as soon 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 sooner** we leave, **the earlier** we'll arrive. (= if we leave sooner, we'll arrive earlier)*
 - ***The younger** you are, **the easier** it is to learn.*
 - ***The more** I thought about the plan, **the less** I liked it.*

More on Comparatives and Superlatives

- ▶ We use **elder** only when we talk about people in a family (my elder sister, their elder son etc.). You can also use **older**:

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

But we do not say that 'somebody is elder':

- *My sister is **older** than me. (NOT ~~elder than me~~)*

- ▶ **Before comparatives** you can use:

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

- *I felt ill earlier, but I feel **much better** now. (or **a lot better**)*
- *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.*
- *The problem is **far more serious** than we thought at first.*

- ▶ **than me / than I am etc.** You can say:

- *They have more money **than us**. or They have more money **than we have**.*
- *You're taller **than me**. or You're taller **than I am**. (not usually You're taller than I)*

As ... as

- ▶ We use **as ... as** to say that people or things are **equal** in some way.
 - *Is it **as good as** you expected?*
 - *She speaks French **as well as** the rest of us.*
- ▶ Some more examples of **not as ... (as)**:
 - *Jack **isn't as old as** he looks. (= he looks **older than** he is)*
 - *The weather is better today. It's **not as cold**. (= yesterday was **colder than** today)*
 - *Lisa **didn't do as well** in the exam **as** she had hoped. (= she had hoped to do **better**)*
- ▶ After **not**, we can use **so ... as**:
 - *He's **not as/so successful as** his father.*
 - *It's not warm, but it's **not so cold as** yesterday. (= it's not 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)*
- ▶ 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.*
- ▶ **as me / as I am etc.** You can say:
 - *He's not as clever **as her**. or He's not as clever **as she is**.*
 - *I can't run as fast **as him**. or I can't run as fast **as he can**.*

Like & As

- ▶ We can use **like** and **as** to say that things are **similar**.
 - **Like** is a **preposition**, used before a **noun** or **pronoun**.
 - **As** is a **conjunction**, used before **subject + verb** or a **prepositional expression**.

- ▶ **Examples:**
 - *He runs **like the wind**.*
 - *She looks **like me**.*
 - *Nobody knows her **as I do**.*
 - *On Friday, **as on Monday**, we meet at eight.*

- ▶ Note the common expressions: **as I said, as you know, as you see, as usual**.

- ▶ To talk about **jobs, functions** etc., we use **as**, not like.
 - *He's working **as a waiter**.*
 - *I used my shoe **as a hammer**.*

- ▶ **Like or as?**
 - *She left _____ she came, silently.*
 - *My brother isn't at all _____ me.*

So & Such

- ▶ We can use **so** and **such** to make the meaning stronger:
 - ▶ We use **so** before an **adjective** (without a noun), or an **adverb**.
 - ▶ We use **such** before (adjective +) **noun**. **A/An** comes after **such**.
- ▶ Examples:
 - *I'm **so hungry** that I could eat a horse.*
 - *I wish you couldn't drive **so fast**.*
 - *She's **such a baby**.*
 - *I didn't know you had **such nice friends**.*
 - *It was **such a comfortable bed** that I went straight to sleep.*
- ▶ Put in such or so.
 - *The book was _____ boring that I stopped reading it.*
 - *It was _____ a hot day that nobody could do any work.*

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