

Comparatives and Superlatives with Cities

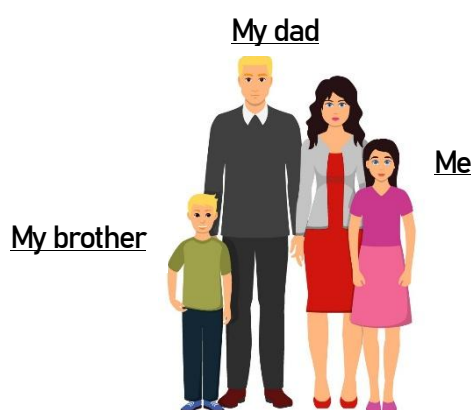
Comparatives vs Superlatives

We use an adjective + 'er' to compare two things (taller, faster, longer). The structure is 'adjective + er' + than.

For example: "*I am taller than my brother.*"

We use an adjective + 'est' to say something is *the most*. The structure is 'the adjective + est.'

For example: "*My dad is the tallest in my family.*"



When we are talking about 'good' or 'bad', comparatives and superlatives change.

For 'good' we say 'better' (comparative) and 'best' (superlative).

For example: "*I am better than my brother at football, but my mum is the best in our family.*"

For 'bad' we say 'worse' (comparative) and 'worst' (superlative).

For example: "*My brother is worse than me at math, but my dad is the worst at math in our family.*"



Warm up:

- Is July hotter than December in your country?
- Who is the best at sports in your family?
- What's the biggest city in your country?
- What is the worst city or town in your country?
- Are you more energetic in the mornings or the evenings?
- Who is the funniest person you know?



1. Read the dialogue and circle 3 examples of comparatives and 3 examples of superlatives.

"I grew up in New York, but I live in Hamburg. Hamburg is much *smaller than* New York, but I like that because it's *much quieter* too. Hamburg is not a small city; the population is about two million, but *the biggest* city in Germany is Berlin, which has a population of about four million people. I love living in Hamburg; it's one of *the nicest* cities I've ever been to, but it's not perfect. *The worst* thing about living in Hamburg is the traffic. It sounds crazy, but even though it is *smaller than* New York, the traffic is *worse* in a lot of places.

However, the public transport system is *better than* in any other city I know, and it's *the most reliable* in Germany. The air is *cleaner than* in New York, and the streets feel *safer*, especially at night. Housing is *cheaper than* in New York, but it's still *more expensive than* in *smaller* German cities. The winters are *colder and darker than* I expected, but the summers are *calmer and more relaxing* than summers in big American cities.

Hamburg is also *greener* than most major cities, with more parks and lakes than Berlin, and I think it's *the most welcoming* city I know. The food is *worse than* New York's, but it's getting *better* every year."

Long Vs Short Adjectives

You may have noticed in the text above that sometimes we add 'er' to an adjective to make it a comparative, but sometimes we add 'more' before the adjective instead of adding 'er' at the end. Generally, if a word is 3 syllables or longer, we add 'more.' If a word is shorter, we use 'er.'

For example: "*Chicago is colder than Hong Kong.*" ('cold' = short adjective)

vs "*New York is more expensive than Hamburg.*" ('expensive' = long adjective)

The same is true for superlatives. For short adjectives we add 'est' at the end, and for long adjectives we add 'most' at the beginning.

For example: "*Munich is the coldest city in Germany*" ('cold' = short adjective)

vs "*New York is the most expensive city in America*" ('expensive' = long adjective)

Note: adjectives with two syllables can take either 'more/most' or 'er/est.' Generally, two syllable adjectives that end with an open, vowel sound take 'er/est.'

For example: busy = busier / busiest, happy = happier / happiest, simple = simpler / simplest.

Adjectives that end in harder, consonant sounds usually take the 'more/most.'

For example: boring = more boring / most boring, relaxed = more relaxed / most relaxed, polite = more polite / most polite.

 **2. Complete the sentences with the comparative or superlative form of the adjective in brackets.**

- a) This exercise is *easier* (easy) than the last one.
- b) Of all my friends, Jenna is the *most talkative* (talkative).
- c) July is *colder* (cold) than January in Australia.
- d) That was the *funniest* (funny) joke I've heard all week.
- e) He did very well in the test, it's one of the *most impressive* (impressive) results I've seen.
- f) Who is the *youngest* (young) person in your family?
- g) Wednesday is the *busiest* (busy) day of the week for me.
- h) This is the *worst* (bad) movie I've seen this year.
- i) Our new teacher is *friendlier* (friendly) than the old one.
- j) We should be careful, this is the *most dangerous* (dangerous) area in the city.
- k) That was the *most difficult* (difficult) question on the test.
- l) Math is much *more* interesting (interesting) than English for me.
- m) This is the *most important* (important) decision I've ever made.

 **3. With a partner, rank the cities in the categories below. Try to use the vocabulary you have learned so far.**

New York	Hong Kong	Mexico City	Melbourne	Moscow
----------	-----------	-------------	-----------	--------

The correct answers are on the next page

Population (biggest to smallest): 1) 2)

3) 4) 5)

Average temperature (hottest to coldest): 1) 2)

3) 4) 5)

Cost of living (most expensive to cheapest): 1) 2)

3) 4) 5)



4. Write 3 comparative and 3 superlative sentences about what you and your partner decided from the previous page.

Comparatives:

For example: *"We think is more expensive than..."*

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Superlatives:

For example: *"We think the biggest city is....."*

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)



5. Look at the information and compare it with your guesses from the previous page.

For example: *"We thought was the biggest city, but it's actually"* or *"..... is colder than I thought."*

Population (biggest to smallest): 1) Moscow (12.5 million) 2) Mexico City (9.2 million)
 3) New York (8.5 million) 4) Hong Kong (7.5 million) 5) Melbourne (5.1 million)

Average temperature (hottest to coldest): 1) Hong Kong (23 °C) 2) Mexico City (17 °C)
 3) Melbourne (15 °C) 4) New York (13 °C) 5) Moscow (6 °C)

Cost of living (most expensive to cheapest, per month including rent):

1) New York (\$5,500) 2) Hong Kong (\$3,200) 3) Melbourne (\$2,600)
 4) Moscow (\$1,700) 5) Mexico City (\$1,200)

As (adjective) as

We can use the structure 'as' + adjective + 'as' to say two things are the same.

For example: *"I am as tall as my brother, we are both 180cm."*

We can also use 'not as' + adjective + 'as' to compare things negatively.

For example: *"I am not as tall as my brother"* means the same thing as *"My brother is taller than me."*




6. Use the negative 'not as...as' structure to complete the sentences below with any adjective that makes sense in the context.

- a) This café ise.g. *"not as good as"*..... the one near my house
- b) Winter here is *not as cold as* winter in Canada.
- c) The second movie was not *as good/bad/boring as* the first one.
- d) Her hair looks nice, but I still think it's *not as nice/beautiful as* my hair.
- e) He is *not as good/bad as* he thinks he is at football.
- f) This app is *not as complicated/ complex as* it looks, it's actually quite easy to use!
- g) My father is *not as popular/ social as* my mother, she has way more friends.
- h) I know you think you're the smartest person here, but you're *not as smart as* you think you are.
- i) In high school I was *not as tall/loud/crazy as* most of the other students.
- j) The hotel was *not as nice/clean as* we expected, we weren't very happy with it.



7. Ask and answer the questions below with a partner. Try to use the 'not as... as' structure in your answer.

- a) Is your current house bigger or smaller than the house you grew up in?
- b) What is more important to you, money or time?
- c) Is English harder to learn than your native language?
- d) Are you more confident now than you were five years ago?
- e) Do you prefer shopping online or in a store? Why?
- f) Would you prefer to live in the city or in the countryside? Why?

 8. Write a text comparing either two cities you know, or two areas within the city you live in. Try to use all the structures you have studied so far.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

 9. Listen to the conversation¹ between Janet and Bridger and answer the questions.

- a) Why did Janet find Vienna stressful, and why does Bridger find it relaxing? *Because she moved from a smaller city (Belfast), and he moved from London (bigger), so for Bridger it's small and calm, and for Janet it's big and loud.*
- b) Why didn't Bridger stay in Paris? *It was too expensive*
- c) Which city had the best food according to Bridger? *Rome.*
- d) What are two reasons Bridger didn't like living in Rome? *It was dirty, and the Romans are the worst drivers.*
- e) What are two reasons Bridger likes Amsterdam so much? *He likes coffee, and the buildings, and he thinks the people are very friendly.*
- f) What does Janet think about the people in Vienna, and what does Bridger think about them? *Janet thinks they are very friendly, but Bridger thinks they are not.*
- g) What does Janet think will help Bridger like Vienna more? *She thinks he needs to find some cafes he likes and make friends.*

¹ <http://quick-and-easy-english.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/comparatives-and-superlatives-cities.mp3>

Transcript

Bridger: So, Janet, how long have you lived in Vienna for?

Janet: About 2 years. I'm really happy here now, but in the beginning I didn't like it. I found it really stressful at first.

Bridger: Really? But it's so calm and peaceful here! How could you find it stressful?

Janet: Well, I moved here from Belfast, and Belfast is much smaller than Vienna. I think Vienna is about five times bigger than Belfast, so it was a big change.

Bridger: Ok, well I come from London, so Vienna is a lot smaller and more relaxed than London. In fact, I think Vienna is the smallest city I've ever lived in.

Janet: How many cities have you lived in?

Bridger: I've lived in 7 cities, I like to move around a lot.

Janet: 7?? That's a lot, I've only lived in 2. What was your favourite?

Bridger: Oh, that's a hard question. Paris was the most beautiful, but it was also by far the most expensive. I liked it there, but it was too expensive to live there long term.

Janet: I've heard it's expensive, but I've also heard they have the best food there.

Bridger: Well... the food was very good there, but I wouldn't say the best. I think the best food was in Rome.

Janet: Really? You don't think the food in Paris is as good as the food in Rome??

Bridger: No, I don't think so. Paris has amazing food if you go to a restaurant and pay a lot of money, but in Rome the food is cheaper and usually better, in my opinion anyway.

Janet: So, then Rome was the best city you've lived?

Bridger: No, it wasn't the best city, it just had the best food. It was also the dirtiest city I've ever lived in, and the Romans are the worst drivers in the world.

Janet: So... what was the best?

Bridger: If I had to choose, I would say Amsterdam. I just loved the lifestyle there. The buildings, the rivers, everything is beautiful there. But mostly because I love coffee, and Amsterdam has amazing coffee.

Janet: Better than in Vienna?

Bridger: Oh way better than Vienna. And the people in Amsterdam are some of the friendliest people in the world. To be honest the people in Vienna are not as friendly as I would like.

Janet: Really? I find them really friendly. They're much nicer than people in Belfast.

Bridger: That's interesting. I guess it really depends on what you're used to.

Janet: Exactly. Compared to Belfast, people here are much more polite and helpful.

Bridger: Maybe I just haven't lived here long enough yet. How long did it take you to start liking Vienna?

Janet: Probably about six months. Once I found my favourite cafés and made some friends, it felt much more like home.

Bridger: That makes sense. I think every city gets better once you feel settled and comfortable.

Janet: Definitely. And now I can't imagine living anywhere else.

Bridger: Well, maybe in a year I'll be saying Vienna is my favourite city too. I mean it does have the best schnitzel!

Janet: Maybe! And if not, you can always move again.

Bridger: True. But for now, I think I'll stay.