

Superlative adjectives, such as “the biggest” or “the smallest,” are used to talk about extremes. Long adjectives take “most” and “least” to show an extreme.

See also:

Articles 63 Adjectives 92  
Comparative adjectives 94

### 97.1 SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVES

For most adjectives with one or two syllables, “-est” is added to make the superlative.

Horses are faster than dogs,  
but cheetahs are **the fastest** land animals.

The comparative describes the difference between two things.

The definite article (“the”) is always used before the superlative.

The superlative describes which thing is the most extreme.



### FURTHER EXAMPLES



Giraffes are **the tallest** animals in the world.



Blue whales are **the largest** animals in the world.



Sloths are **the slowest** animals in the zoo.



Dolphins are **the smartest** animals in the world.

### HOW TO FORM

SUBJECT + VERB

Cheetahs are

“THE” + SUPERLATIVE

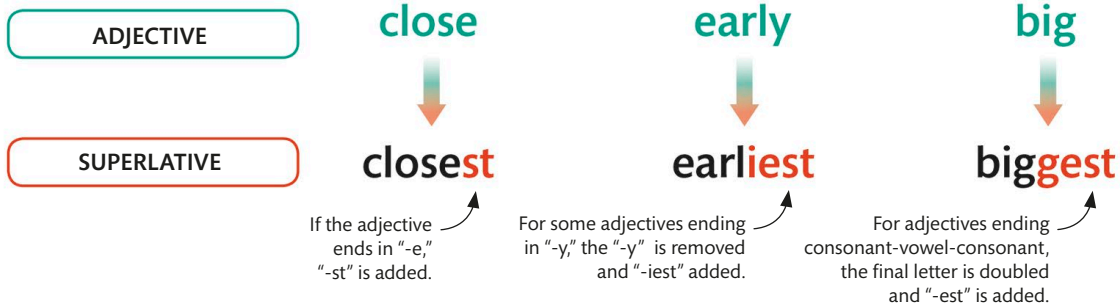
**the fastest**

REST OF SENTENCE

land animals.

## 97.2 FORMING SUPERLATIVES

There are different rules for forming superlatives depending on the ending of the simple form of the adjective.



### EXAMPLES



Driving is **the easiest** way to get there.



The firefighter was **the bravest** person I'd ever met.



This has been **the hottest** summer in years!

## 97.3 IRREGULAR SUPERLATIVES

Some common adjectives have irregular superlatives.



### EXAMPLES



School days are **the best** days of your life.



I was **the worst** at drawing in my art class.



I lived **the farthest** from school of all my friends.

## 97.4 SUPERLATIVES WITH LONG ADJECTIVES

For some two-syllable adjectives and for adjectives of three syllables or more, use "the most" or "the least" before the adjective to form the superlative.



The motorcycle is more expensive than the scooter, but the sports car is **the most expensive** vehicle.

"The most" is used with the adjective.

The adjective stays the same. "Expensivest" is not a valid form.

The motorcycle is less expensive than the sports car, but the scooter is **the least expensive** vehicle.

"The least" means the opposite of "the most."

### HOW TO FORM

SUBJECT + VERB

"THE" + MOST / LEAST

ADJECTIVE

REST OF SENTENCE

This is

**the most**

**the least**

expensive

dish on the menu.

### FURTHER EXAMPLES

The science museum is **the most interesting** museum in town.



This is **the least comfortable** chair in the room.



The Twister is **the most exciting** ride in the theme park.



Teacups are **the least enjoyable** ride in the theme park.



## ! COMMON MISTAKES FORMING SUPERLATIVES

When forming superlatives, it is incorrect to add "most" before the adjective if it already has a superlative ending.

"Best" is already a superlative adjective so "most" is unnecessary.

I am **most best** at running. ❌

I am the **best** at running. ✅

## 97.5 SUPERLATIVES WITH MODIFIERS

"Easily" or "by far" can make superlative adjectives more specific.  
"One of" shows that the superlative belongs to a group of things.



The clock tower is **easily by far** the **tallest** building in the town.

These modifiers make the superlative stronger.

"One of" makes the superlative part of a group.

With long superlatives the modifier goes before "the."

The clock tower is **one of the most imposing** buildings in the town.

If "one of" is used with superlatives, the noun must be in plural form.



## FURTHER EXAMPLES

Sally is **easily the tallest** person I know.



This hostel is **by far the cheapest** place to stay.



Tim is **easily the shortest** person I know.



The Grand is **by far the most expensive** place to stay.



Physics is **one of the most confusing** subjects I study.



English is **one of the least complicated** subjects I study.

