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Learn English with Sarah

GRAMMAR

Higher, Colder, Deeper: Comparing Our World

Comparative and superlative adjectives through the planet's most extreme places

B1

90 min

Grammar

Vocabulary

Reading

Listening

Speaking

+ ADDITIONAL LESSON INCLUDED: Vocabulary • Reading • Listening

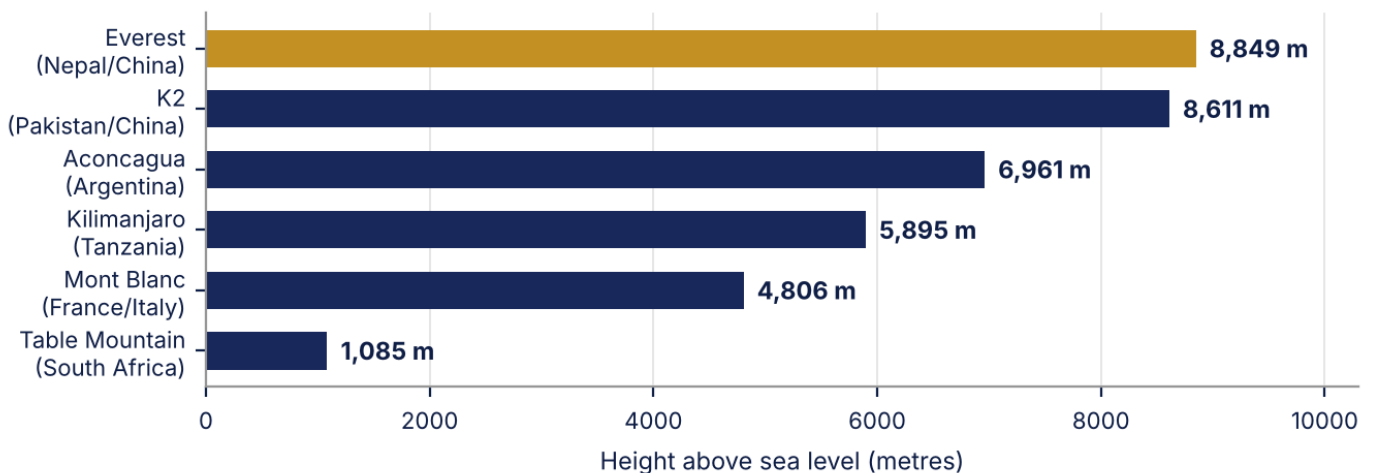
1 Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to:

1. form comparative and superlative adjectives correctly, including spelling changes and irregular forms
2. use *than*, *the*, *as ... as* and *not as ... as* to compare people, places and things
3. understand a short reading and a TED-Ed video about the world's extreme places
4. describe and compare places in your own country with confidence

2 Warm-Up

Look at the chart and answer the questions with a partner.



1. Which mountain is the highest? Which is the lowest?
2. Is Kilimanjaro higher or lower than Mont Blanc? By how much?
3. Have you seen or climbed any of these mountains? What is the highest place you have ever been?

Grammar Practice

Comparative and superlative adjectives: rules, practice and production

3 Grammar Focus

Adjective type	Rule	Comparative	Superlative
Short (1 syllable)	add -er / -est	tall → taller	the tallest
Ends in -e	add -r / -st	large → larger	the largest
Consonant + vowel + consonant	double the last letter	big → bigger	the biggest
Ends in consonant + -y	change y → i	dry → drier, busy → busier	the drier, the busiest
Long (2+ syllables)	use more / the most	more dangerous	the most dangerous
Irregular	learn them!	good → better · bad → worse · far → further	the best · the worst · the furthest

Making comparisons

- Use **than** after a comparative: *K2 is more dangerous **than** Everest.*
- Use **the** before a superlative: *Everest is **the** highest mountain **in** the world.*
- Same: **as + adjective + as** — *Paris is about **as big as** Rome.*
- Different: **not as + adjective + as** — *The Amazon is **not as long as** the Nile.*

Watch out! Never use *more + -er* together: × *more higher* → ✓ *higher*. Don't confuse **than** (comparing) with **then** (time).

4 Form Practice: Complete the Table

Write the comparative and superlative form of each adjective. Be careful with spelling!

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative	Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
1. big			7. modern		
2. hot			8. beautiful		
3. safe			9. good		
4. easy			10. bad		
5. busy			11. far		
6. cheap			12. thin		

5 Spelling Sort

Put each adjective into the correct column according to how it forms its comparative and superlative.

cold · wide · wet · happy · expensive · good · fast · nice · fat · heavy · interesting · bad · small · late · sad · funny · comfortable · far

+ -er / -est	+ -r / -st	double the letter	y → i	more / most	irregular

6 Comparatives: Gap Fill

Complete the sentences with the comparative form of the adjective + **than**.

1. A plane is _____ (fast) a train.
2. My sister is _____ (old) me.
3. For me, Spanish is _____ (easy) Chinese.
4. This sofa is _____ (comfortable) that chair.
5. In South Africa, January is _____ (hot) June.
6. My test result was _____ (bad) yours.
7. Johannesburg is _____ (big) Cape Town.
8. This road is _____ (busy) the one near my house.

7 Superlatives: Gap Fill

Complete the sentences with **the** + the superlative form of the adjective.

1. Russia is _____ (large) country in the world.
2. This is _____ (funny) film I have ever seen.
3. January is often _____ (hot) month of the year in South Africa.
4. Who is _____ (good) player in your team?
5. That was _____ (bad) day of my life!
6. Diamonds are _____ (hard) natural material on Earth.
7. It's _____ (expensive) restaurant in town.
8. She is _____ (intelligent) student in the class.

8 Choose the Correct Option

Circle the correct option.

1. My brother is **taller / more tall** than me.
2. This is **the best / the better** pizza in town.
3. Tom is **as / than** tall as his father.
4. Cats are **more independent / independenter** than dogs.
5. Is this **the most cheap / the cheapest** hotel?
6. Today is **hotter / hotter** than yesterday.
7. My car is older **than / then** yours.
8. This test is **easier / more easy** than the last one.

9 Mixed Practice

Complete each sentence with the correct form of the adjective in brackets. Add the where needed.

1. Antarctica is _____ (cold) place on Earth.
2. Is the Nile _____ (long) than the Amazon?
3. Cape Town is _____ (sunny) than London.
4. This is _____ (good) holiday I've ever had.
5. Climbing K2 is _____ (dangerous) than climbing Everest.
6. The weather today is _____ (bad) than yesterday.
7. Lake Baikal is _____ (deep) lake in the world.
8. My village is much _____ (quiet) than the city.

10 Rewrite with *as ... as*

Rewrite each sentence using **as ... as** or **not as ... as** so that it means the same.

1. A bike is slower than a car. (*not as ... as — fast*)

2. My flat and your flat are the same size. (*as ... as — big*)

3. Tea is cheaper than coffee here. (*not as ... as — expensive*)

4. Anna and Ben are both 1.70 m tall. (*as ... as — tall*)

5. Winter in Cape Town is colder than winter in Durban. *Start: Winter in Durban ...*

6. My English is worse than my sister's. (*not as ... as — good*)

11 Compare the Hotels

Look at the table. Write a full sentence for each prompt using a comparative or a superlative.

Hotel	Price per night	Distance to beach	Rating	Rooms
Sea View Guesthouse	\$80	50 m	★★★	20
City Lodge	\$120	2 km	★★★★	150
Palm Beach Resort	\$250	200 m	★★★★★	300

1. Sea View / City Lodge — *cheap*

2. Palm Beach Resort — *expensive* (all three)

3. Sea View — *near* the beach (all three)

4. Palm Beach Resort — *big* (all three)

5. City Lodge / Sea View — *good* (rating)

6. City Lodge — *far* from the beach (all three)

7. Sea View — *small* (all three)

8. Palm Beach Resort / City Lodge — *expensive*

12 Spot the Mistake & Rewrite

Each sentence has *ONE* mistake. Rewrite the sentence correctly.

1. Everest is more higher than K2.

2. This is the most best café in town.

3. My brother is taller then me.

4. Today is hotter that yesterday.

5. She is the most young person in her family.

6. This exercise is more easy than the last one.

7. Mount Everest is the higher mountain in the world.

8. Your bag is bigger than mine.

13 Key-Word Transformation

Complete the second sentence so it means the same as the first. Use the word in **bold** and write **3-8 words**. Do not change the word.

1. Tom is taller than Sam.
AS
Sam _____ Tom.
2. No mountain in the world is higher than Everest.
HIGHEST
Everest _____ in the world.
3. No river in Africa is longer than the Nile.
LONGEST
The Nile _____ Africa.
4. My old phone was cheaper than this one.
EXPENSIVE
This phone _____ my old one.
5. I have never seen a more beautiful beach.
MOST
This is _____ I have ever seen.
6. Yesterday's weather was better than today's.
WORSE
Today's weather _____ yesterday's.
7. Paris and Rome are more or less the same size.
ABOUT
Paris _____ Rome.
8. The bus is slower than the train.
FASTER
The train _____ the bus.

14 Your Turn: Speaking & Writing

Write a sentence for each prompt, then discuss your answers with your tutor.

1. Compare yourself with someone in your family. (*age, height, personality*)

2. Name the best and the worst film you have ever seen.

3. Compare your town now with your town ten years ago.

4. What is the most beautiful place in your country? Why?

5. Compare two jobs: a teacher and a doctor. Use *not as ... as*.

6. Which is the most difficult thing about learning English for you?

Vocabulary, Reading & Listening: Planet of Extremes

Use the grammar in real English: words, a reading text and a TED-Ed video about the world's extreme places

15 Vocabulary: Mix & Match

Match each word (1–10) with its meaning (A–J).

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1. steep | A extremely cold |
| 2. remote | B extremely big |
| 3. enormous | C full of people |
| 4. freezing | D not wide; only a short distance from one side to the other |
| 5. crowded | E very, very old; from thousands of years ago |
| 6. ancient | F calm and quiet, with no noise or trouble |
| 7. narrow | G with very little or no rain or water |
| 8. dry | H rising or falling very quickly, so it is hard to walk up or down |
| 9. dangerous | I far away from towns and other people |
| 10. peaceful | J likely to hurt or kill you |

16 Reading: Planet of Extremes

Read the text. Underline every comparative and circle every superlative you find.

- Our planet is full of records. Some places are hotter, colder, higher or deeper than anywhere else on Earth. Scientists measure these places carefully, and the results are often surprising.
- Mount Everest, on the border between Nepal and China, is the highest mountain in the world. It is 8,849 metres tall – about eight times higher than Table Mountain in Cape Town. K2 is the second-highest mountain, but many climbers say it is more dangerous than Everest because its slopes are steeper and the weather is often worse.
- The Pacific is the largest and deepest ocean. Its deepest point, the Challenger Deep, is almost 11,000 metres below the surface – deeper than Everest is tall! On land, Lake Baikal in Russia is the deepest lake on Earth. It holds more fresh water than all five of North America's Great Lakes together. The Nile and the Amazon are the longest rivers in the world, but experts still argue about which one is longer.
- The coldest temperature ever recorded on the ground was -89.2°C , at Vostok Station in Antarctica in 1983. Surprisingly, Antarctica is also the largest desert in the world, because it gets very little rain or snow. The Sahara is the biggest hot desert. It is almost as big as the United States.
- Why do we love these records? Perhaps because they make our world feel bigger and more exciting. The more we learn about the extremes, the more we realise how amazing our planet really is.

17 Reading Comprehension

Answer the questions in full sentences.

- Which two countries share Mount Everest?
- About how many times higher is Everest than Table Mountain?
- Why do many climbers think K2 is more dangerous than Everest?
- Which is the largest and deepest ocean?
- Is the Challenger Deep deeper than Everest is tall? Give the numbers.
- What two facts make Lake Baikal special?
- Why is Antarctica called a desert?
- Is the Sahara bigger than the United States? Explain.

18 Listening



Why is Mount Everest so tall? — Michele Koppes

TED-Ed · short animated video (under 5 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uy9GFAOGGXU>

Scan the QR code or click the link to watch.

Before you watch

1. How do you think mountains become so tall?
2. Do you think Mount Everest is getting taller, smaller, or staying the same? Why?

While you watch

Circle **T** (true) or **F** (false).

1. The video says Everest is about 8,850 metres high. **T / F**
2. Everest formed when two continental plates crashed into each other. **T / F**
3. This collision started about 50 million years ago. **T / F**
4. Erosion makes mountains taller. **T / F**
5. On steeper slopes, glaciers can cut away rock faster. **T / F**
6. Everest is quite close to the tropics, so its snow line is high. **T / F**
7. Everest's glaciers are enormous, so they wear the mountain down very quickly. **T / F**

After you watch

1. Write three sentences comparing Everest with a mountain or hill in your country. Use a comparative, a superlative and *not as ... as*.

19 Vocabulary Gap Fill

Complete the sentences with words from the box. There are two extra terms you don't need.

dangerous	peaceful	steep	crowded	enormous
narrow	freezing	ancient	dry	remote

1. The path up the hill was very _____, so we walked slowly.
2. The island is so _____ that the boat only comes once a month.
3. Take a warm coat – it's _____ outside!
4. The market was so _____ that we couldn't move.
5. This street is too _____ for buses.
6. The desert is very _____; it hasn't rained there for years.
7. Swimming in this river is _____ because the current is very strong.
8. Blue whales are _____ animals – longer than a basketball court.

20 Word Formation

Use the word in **CAPITALS** at the end of each sentence to form a word that fits the gap.

1. The _____ of Mount Everest is 8,849 metres. **HIGH**
2. The _____ of the Nile is about 6,650 kilometres. **LONG**
3. Lake Baikal has a maximum _____ of over 1,600 metres. **DEEP**
4. The river is not very wide, but its _____ changes in the rainy season. **WIDE**
5. Climbers need great physical _____ to reach the top. **STRONG**
6. Tourists come from all over the world to see the _____ of the mountains. **BEAUTIFUL**
7. Mountain rescue teams know how to deal with _____. **DANGEROUS**
8. We enjoyed the _____ and quiet of the countryside after the noisy city. **PEACEFUL**

21 Find the Word

Find a word in the reading that matches each meaning. The paragraph number and word class are given.

1. Paragraph 1 (verb): to find the exact size or amount of something
2. Paragraph 1 (adjective): unexpected; making you feel surprised
3. Paragraph 2 (noun): the line that divides two countries
4. Paragraph 2 (noun): people who go up mountains
5. Paragraph 2 (noun): the sides of a hill or mountain
6. Paragraph 3 (noun): the top part of water
7. Paragraph 3 (adjective): not salty (water)
8. Paragraph 3 (verb): to disagree with someone and discuss it
9. Paragraph 4 (verb, past participle): measured and written down officially
10. Paragraph 5 (verb): to begin to understand something

22 Discussion

Discuss these questions with your tutor or a partner.

1. What is the most beautiful place you have ever visited? Why?
2. Is your town bigger or smaller than the place where you grew up? Which do you prefer?
3. Would you rather visit the hottest place on Earth or the coldest? Why?
4. What is the most dangerous thing you have ever done?
5. In your opinion, is it better to live in the mountains or near the sea?
6. Which is the best season in your country? Which is the worst?

23 Wrap-Up

Prepare a 2-minute presentation for your tutor next lesson: "The most amazing places in my country."

- Compare at least three places (mountains, lakes, cities, beaches...).
- Use at least **five comparatives**, **five superlatives** and **one (not) as ... as**.
- Use all ten vocabulary words from this lesson: *steep, remote, enormous, freezing, crowded, ancient, narrow, dry, dangerous, peaceful*.



Answer Key — Higher, Colder, Deeper: Comparing Our World

PART A: GRAMMAR PRACTICE

Part 4 — Form Practice: Complete the Table

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
1. big	bigger	the biggest
2. hot	hotter	the hottest
3. safe	safer	the safest
4. easy	easier	the easiest
5. busy	busier	the busiest
6. cheap	cheaper	the cheapest
7. modern	more modern	the most modern
8. beautiful	more beautiful	the most beautiful
9. good	better	the best
10. bad	worse	the worst
11. far	further / farther	the furthest / farthest
12. thin	thinner	the thinnest

Part 5 — Spelling Sort

+ -er / -est	+ -r / -st	double the letter	y → i	more / most	irregular
cold, fast, small	wide, nice, late	wet, fat, sad	happy, heavy, funny	expensive, interesting, comfortable	good, bad, far

Part 6 — Comparatives: Gap Fill

1. faster than
2. older than
3. easier than
4. more comfortable than
5. hotter than
6. worse than
7. bigger than
8. busier than

Part 7 — Superlatives: Gap Fill

1. the largest
2. the funniest
3. the hottest
4. the best
5. the worst
6. the hardest
7. the most expensive
8. the most intelligent

Part 8 — Choose the Correct Option

1. taller
2. the best
3. as
4. more independent
5. the cheapest
6. hotter
7. than
8. easier

Part 9 — Mixed Practice

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. the coldest | 5. more dangerous |
| 2. longer | 6. worse |
| 3. sunnier | 7. the deepest |
| 4. the best | 8. quieter |

Part 10 — Rewrite with *as ... as*

1. A bike is not as fast as a car.
2. My flat is as big as your flat.
3. Tea is not as expensive as coffee here.
4. Anna is as tall as Ben. / Ben is as tall as Anna.
5. Winter in Durban is not as cold as winter in Cape Town.
6. My English is not as good as my sister's.

Part 11 — Compare the Hotels

1. Sea View Guesthouse is cheaper than City Lodge.
2. Palm Beach Resort is the most expensive hotel.
3. Sea View Guesthouse is the nearest / closest to the beach.
4. Palm Beach Resort is the biggest hotel.
5. City Lodge is better than Sea View Guesthouse.
6. City Lodge is the furthest / farthest from the beach.
7. Sea View Guesthouse is the smallest hotel.
8. Palm Beach Resort is more expensive than City Lodge.

Part 12 — Spot the Mistake & Rewrite

1. Everest is **higher** than K2.
2. This is **the best** café in town.
3. My brother is taller **than** me.
4. Today is hotter **than** yesterday.
5. She is **the youngest** person in her family.
6. This exercise is **easier** than the last one.
7. Mount Everest is **the highest** mountain in the world.
8. Your bag is **bigger** than mine.

Part 13 — Key-Word Transformation

1. Sam **is not as tall as** Tom. (*isn't as tall as*)
2. Everest **is the highest mountain** in the world.
3. The Nile **is the longest river in** Africa.
4. This phone **is more expensive than** my old one.
5. This is **the most beautiful beach** I have ever seen.
6. Today's weather **is worse than** yesterday's.
7. Paris **is about as big as** Rome.
8. The train **is faster than** the bus.

Part 14 — Your Turn: Speaking & Writing

Answers will vary. Check spelling of *-er/-est* forms, use of *than* and *the*, and no double comparatives.

ADDITIONAL LESSON: VOCABULARY, READING & LISTENING: PLANET OF EXTREMES

Part 15 — Vocabulary: Mix & Match

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. steep → H | 6. ancient → E |
| 2. remote → I | 7. narrow → D |
| 3. enormous → B | 8. dry → G |
| 4. freezing → A | 9. dangerous → J |
| 5. crowded → C | 10. peaceful → F |

Part 17 — Reading Comprehension

1. Nepal and China (it is on the border between them).
2. About eight times higher (8,849 m compared with 1,085 m).
3. Because its slopes are steeper and the weather is often worse.
4. The Pacific Ocean.
5. Yes. The Challenger Deep is almost 11,000 m deep; Everest is 8,849 m tall.
6. It is the deepest lake on Earth, and it holds more fresh water than all five Great Lakes together.
7. Because it gets very little rain or snow.
8. No. It is almost as big as the United States, but not bigger.

Part 18 — Listening

1. T — the video gives a height of about 8,850 m.
2. T
3. T — about 50 million years ago.
4. F — erosion wears mountains down and makes them lower.
5. T
6. T
7. F — they are quite small, so they cannot wear Everest down quickly.

After you watch: answers will vary.

Part 19 — Vocabulary Gap Fill

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. steep | 5. narrow |
| 2. remote | 6. dry |
| 3. freezing | 7. dangerous |
| 4. crowded | 8. enormous |

Extra words not needed: ancient, peaceful

Part 20 — Word Formation

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| 1. height | 5. strength |
| 2. length | 6. beauty |
| 3. depth | 7. danger |
| 4. width | 8. peace |

Part 21 — Find the Word

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. measure | 6. surface |
| 2. surprising | 7. fresh |
| 3. border | 8. argue |
| 4. climbers | 9. recorded |
| 5. slopes | 10. realise |

Part 22 — Discussion

Answers will vary. Listen for accurate comparative and superlative forms and use of the lesson vocabulary.

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