

Comparison of Adjectives



Comparison of adjectives in English

➤ In the sentences,

POSITIVE DEGREE

This is a **long** bone

COMPARATIVE DEGREE

This is a **longer** bone than that

SUPERLATIVE DEGREE

This is **the longest** bone of the human body,

different bones are being compared with respect to their length. The three forms of the adjective – *long*, *longer*, *the longest* – express three different degrees of comparison -positive, comparative a superlative.

In English adjectives are compared regularly either by adding *-er*, *the -est* to the positive *or* by placing the adverbs *more*, *most* before the positive.

Some English adjectives are irregular in comparison *cf. good-better-the best*.

Degrees of comparison in LATIN

- 1) **Positive** – longus, a, um/ brevis, e
- 2) **Comparative** – longior, ius/ brevior, ius
- 3) **Superlative** – longissimus, a, um/
brevissimus, a, um

Types of comparison in LATIN

- 1) Regular:** latus, a, um – latior, ius – latissimus, a, um
- 2) Irregular:** magnus, a, um – major, majus – maximus, a, um
- 3) Incomplete:** (supra) - superior, ius – supremus, a, um

Regular comparison - COMPARATIVE

Nominative of comparatives is formed by adding to the base of the positive the suffix

- ior** for masculine and feminine
- ius** for the neuter

Positive	Base	Comparative M+F	Comparative N
Longus, a, um	Long-	Long-ior	Long-ius
Simplex, cis	Simplic-	Simplic-ior	Simplic-ius
Brevis, e	Brev-	Brev-ior	Brev-ius

Comparatives are declined like Nouns of III. Declension (DOLOR+CORPUS)

! Genitive sg. of comparative always ends in -ioris

Comparativ – how to decline

	singular		plural	
nom.	brevior	brevius	breviores	breviora
gen.	brevioris		breviorum	
ak.	breviorem	brevius	breviores	breviora
abl.	breviore		brevioribus	

Comparatives are declined like nouns of III. declension - DOLOR (M., F.) and CORPUS (N.). Genitive has for all 3 genders ending – IORIS.

simplex, simplicis -> simplicior (m., f.), simplicius (n.) -> g. sg.: **simplicioris** (m., f., n.)
latus, a, um -> latior (m., f.), latius (n.) -> g. sg.: **latioris**

Regular comparison - SUPERLATIVE

Majority of superlatives are formed by adding to the base of the positive the suffix **-issimus, a, um** | 6 adjectives add suffix **-limus, a, um**. Adjectives ending in **-er** form the superlative by adding suffix **-rimus, a, um** to the masculine nominative singular of the positive.

POSITIVE	BASE	SUPERLATIVE
Longus, a, um	Long-	long-issimus, a, um
Simplex, cis	Simplic-	Simplic-issimus, a, um
Brevis, is	Brev-	Brev-issimus, a, um
facilis, difficilis, similis, dissimilis, gracilis, humilis	facil- difficil- simil- dissimil- gracil- humil-	Facil-limus, a, um Difficil-limus, a, um Simil-limus, a, um Dissimil-limus, a, um Gracil-limus, a, um Humil-limus, a, um

Irregular comparison

2 adjectives are irregular in comparison

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
magnus, a, um <i>large</i>	major, majus <i>larger</i>	maximus, a, um <i>the largest</i>
parvus, a, um <i>small</i>	minor, minus <i>smaller</i>	minimus, a, um <i>the smallest</i>

Incomplete comparison

The following adjectives are partially irregular and some are defective in the positive and comparative degrees:

Prepositio n	Positive	Comparative	Superlative
ante	-	anterior, ius	-
post	-	posterior, ius	postremus, a, um
supra	-	superior, ius	supremus, a, um
infra	-	inferior, ius	infimus , a, um
intra	internus, a, um	interior, ius	intimus , a, um
extra	externus, a, um	exterior, ius	extremus, a, um