

1.2

Comparison

1 Read this short text about the fashion industry. Do you agree with its viewpoint?

Why is it that fashion houses design their clothes for the youngest and skinniest men and women? We may not actually want to look like supermodels, but it is a fact that the most underweight models have dominated the world's catwalks for a very long time. It seems it is not in the interests of the fashion industry to represent an 'average' person. Although 'slimmer' may not always mean 'more desirable' in the real world, fashion succeeds because it carries with it that image of the least achievable figure.

2 These comparison structures are used with adjectives.

-er than more ... than the most ...
the -est less ... than the least ...

- Why do we say *younger than* but *less serious than*; and *the youngest* but *the most underweight*?
- Which common adjectives can we either add -er/-est to or use *more/most* with?
- What are the spelling rules for forming the comparative and superlative of words like *slim* and *skinny*?

Check the Grammar folder when you see this:

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Corpus spot

Correct the mistakes that exam candidates have made with comparatives in these sentences.

- What are the better clothes to wear at the camp?
- He is famouser than all the others in the film.
- You look more tired and thinner.
- I would like to buy a much more better one.
- It's now more easy to get there.
- This is even worse than before.

3 Give the comparative and superlative forms of these adjectives.

bright	brighter	the brightest
big		
thin		
dirty		
casual	more/less casual	
outrageous	more/less outrageous	
good		the best
bad	worse	

4 Now complete the following sentences by using one of the adjectives in 3, choosing either the comparative or the superlative form.

- Have you painted this room recently? Everything's looking a lot than before.
- Out of all my friends, Jake wears clothes – take his handmade plastic coat, for example!
- Don't dress up for the club tonight – everyone's looking there nowadays.
- You can't put those disgusting jeans on again – they're pair I've ever seen!
- I'm a bit worried about Sally. She doesn't eat a thing and so she's getting than ever.
- My brother has taste in ties ever – awful designs in really odd colours!
- There's no way you can fit into my shoes – your feet are a lot than mine!
- Market stalls often offer slightly value for money than shops.

Grammar extra

Note the use of *a lot* and *slightly* in sentences *g* and *h*. These are adverbs of degree, which are commonly used with comparative adjectives. Some adverbs of degree are also used with superlative adjectives, as in this example:

Chrissie is by far the most creative student on our design course.

Put these adverbs of degree into the following sentences. Which one can be used with both comparative and superlative adjectives?

- a bit a great deal much
- This ring is only more expensive and it's nicer than the others.
 - Tracksuits may be warmer, but shorts are the best for running in, whatever the weather.

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5 not as ... as / not so ... as

You used this structure to compare the people in the photos in the last lesson. Now compare these different types of footwear in the same way, choosing suitable adjectives from the ones below to describe them.

comfortable elegant practical outrageous

EXAMPLE: *The high-heeled shoes don't look as comfortable as the flip flops.*

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6 Identify the comparative adverbs in this short newspaper article and then explain how they are formed.



FASHION KNOCK-OFFS

Counterfeit consumer goods – more commonly known as 'knock-offs' – are imitation goods that are offered for sale at much lower prices than the genuine products, and they are a big problem for the fashion industry. Knock-offs are now far more readily available than they were a few years ago, both on the web and on market stalls worldwide. These fake designer goods damage the actual brands in more ways than one, reducing their sales and causing them to be regarded

less exclusively, no longer the luxury items they once were. Some people view the matter less seriously, arguing that knock-offs offer a type of free advertising and promotion to the real designer labels. However, there is no getting away from the fact that this is an illegal activity, and the fashion industry is starting to fight back with high-tech solutions that will distinguish the real goods from cheap copies.

7 What do you feel about counterfeit goods? Would you buy them? Why? / Why not?

8 Practise comparison structures by completing the second sentences so that they have a similar meaning to the first. Use the word given.

- Mary is shorter than her brother.
NOT
Mary is **NOT AS TALL AS** her brother.
- These sunglasses cost a bit less than my last pair.
WERE
These sunglasses
than my last pair.
- Coco Chanel was an extremely talented designer.
MOST
Coco Chanel was one of
..... in the world.
- I preferred you with curlier hair.
STRAIGHT
I preferred your hair when it wasn't
....., is now.
- This shoe shop is the cheapest one I've found.
EXPENSIVE
This shoe shop is
..... all the ones I've found.
- Suzanne's host at the dinner party wasn't as elegantly dressed as she was.
MORE
At the dinner party, Suzanne was far
....., her host.
- It takes much less time to travel by train than by car.
LOT
Travelling by train
....., travelling by car.
- Harry wears smarter clothes now he has a girlfriend.
LESS
Harry dressed
he didn't have a girlfriend.
- That model is only 17 – I thought she was older.
AS
That model is not
I thought.

Exam folder 1

Paper 1 Part 4 Key word transformations

In this part of the Reading and Use of English paper you are tested on both grammar and vocabulary. There are six questions and an example at the beginning. You can get up to two marks for each question.

1 Read the Part 4 exam instructions below and then look at the example (0).

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. **Do not change the word given.** You must use between **two** and **five** words, including the word given. Here is an example (0).

0 Have you got a belt that is cheaper than this one? ← *first sentence*

LESS ← *key word – this never changes*

Have you got than this one?

The second sentence must mean the same as the first when it is complete.

The gap can be filled by the words 'a less expensive belt', so you write:

Example: 0 **A LESS EXPENSIVE BELT**

1 mark + 1 mark

Write **only** the missing words **IN CAPITAL LETTERS** on the separate answer sheet.

2 Think about what is important in this exam task. What advice would you give another student about answering Part 4 in the exam?

3 Now read the advice given in the bullet points.

EXAM ADVICE

- Read the first sentence carefully.
- Think about how the key word given is commonly used.
- Complete the gap with a possible answer. You can use the question paper for rough answers.
- Count the number of words you have used in the gap. You must use not fewer than two and not more than five, including the word in bold. Note that a contracted form such as 'don't' counts as two words.
- Read the completed second sentence to check it means the same as the first.
- Ask yourself whether the words in the gap fit the sentence grammatically.
- Transfer your answer (just the words in the gap) to the answer sheet.

4 Complete these key word transformations, using the instructions in 1.

1 'A club has just opened in Leeds,' said Maria to Sally.

TOLD

Maria club in Leeds.

2 I returned the dress to the shop because it was badly made.

TOOK

Because the dress was badly made, I to the shop.

3 Some shops try really hard to help you.

EFFORT

Some shops really to help you.

4 Fifty years ago, cars were slower than they are nowadays.

AS

Fifty years ago, cars they are nowadays.

5 It's a lot easier to learn a language by visiting the country where it's spoken.

MUCH

You can learn a language you visit the country where it's spoken.

6 For me, Stella McCartney is doing a lot more interesting work than other designers today.

FAR

For me, Stella McCartney is by designer working today.