

ORDER OF ADJECTIVES

O	Opinion	beautiful
S	Size	big
A	Age	old
S	Shape	round
C	Colour	red
O	Origin	Italian
M	Material	wooden
P	Purpose	dining

“A beautiful big old round red Italian wooden dining table.”

Alphabetical list of common single-word degree adverbs

almost
absolutely
awfully*
badly*
barely
completely
decidedly
deeply
enough
enormously
entirely
extremely
fairly
far
fully
greatly
hardly

highly
how
incredibly
indeed
intensely
just
least
less
little
lots
most
much
nearly
perfectly
positively
practically
pretty*

purely
quite
rather
really
scarcely
simply
so
somewhat
strongly
terribly*
thoroughly
too
totally
utterly
very
virtually
well

Adverbs of Degree in English

What's an adverb of degree?

An adverb of degree is a word that modifies the strength or intensity of an action or feeling. They are used to indicate the degree to which something is done or felt.

Adverbs of degree list

- Highly
- Moderately
- Nearly
- Partly
- Quite
- Really
- Slightly
- Very
- Absolutely
- Almost
- Completely
- Deeply
- Entirely
- Extremely
- Fully
- Greatly

How to use degree adverbs in sentences

Adverbs of degree can be used in a variety of ways to modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

Examples:

- She almost failed the test.
- He completely forgot the answer.
- The painting is highly prized.

When using adverbs of degree in sentences, it is important to make sure that the adverb is placed in the correct position in the sentence. Adverbs of degree are normally placed before the word they modify.

Avoid overuse!

Using too many adverbs of degree can make your sentences sound clumsy and awkward. Try to use them sparingly, only when necessary, and avoid using several in the same sentence.

Comparatives and superlatives (1)

COMPARATIVES

- Comparatives demonstrate superiority, equality or inferiority of element over another. They can affect adjectives, adverbs, quantities or actions expressed by verbs. If the second element is mentioned it is introduced by **THAN** (majority or minority) or **AS** (equality).

Majority

Adjective + -(E)R / -IER suffix (than)	MORE + adjective (than)
- one-syllable adjectives: <i>tall</i> → <i>taller</i> <i>slim</i> → <i>slimmer</i> <i>nice</i> → <i>nicer</i> - adjectives ending with -y take -ier (y → i): <i>pretty</i> → <i>prettier</i> <i>lovely</i> → <i>lovelier</i> - one-syllable adjectives with final -y: <i>dry</i> → <i>drier</i> - <i>shy</i> → <i>shyer</i> (no change)	- adjectives of 2 or more syllables: <i>boring</i> → <i>more boring</i> <i>tired</i> → <i>more tired</i> - two-syllable adjectives with final -ow, -er, -tle, -ple may take both -er or <i>more</i>: <i>shallow</i> → <i>shallower</i> / <i>more shallow</i> <i>clever</i> → <i>cleverer</i> / <i>more clever</i>
- Adverbs only take the form <i>more</i> + adverb (than), regardless of the ending or length: <i>I did the exercise more quickly than usual.</i> - With fast, hard, early, late, long, close however, the comparative is formed with the suffix -(E)R: <i>I did the exercise faster than usual.</i> - With nouns and verbs the comparative is simply <i>more</i> + noun (than) or verb + <i>more</i> (than): <i>My dog eats more meat than fish. / I work more than I sleep.</i>	

Equality

- With adjectives and adverbs we use the structure *as* + adjective/adverb + *as*:
I'm studying as hard as I can.
- In the negative form the first element can also be introduced by *SO*:
Tom isn't so talkative as his sister.
- With nouns and verbs you use the structure *as* (so) *much* + *as*; when comparing plural nouns you must use *as/so many* + *as*:
I don't sleep as (so) much as I should.
We have as many CDs as DVDs.

Minority

- We use *less* (than) for all classes of words; when comparing plural nouns we use *fewer* (than).
Our train is less crowded than usual.
He spoke less convincingly than the previous time.
I drink less coffee than I used to.
There were fewer cars than now.
- Minority comparatives are not used frequently. We usually make this type of comparison using *not as/so* + *as*:
I'm not as slim as you. (= I'm less slim than you)

SUPERLATIVES

- Superlatives compare one element to all the other ones in a category. They take either the suffix -est (*iest*) or the word *most* and they are typically preceded by *the*. Study these examples:
adjectives → *Tom is the youngest in his family, Carol is the shyest, I'm the most outgoing.*
adverbs → *Rebecca studied the hardest in high school.*
- When we compare a superlative to the rest we use the prepositions *in* (a class or place) or *of* (a group): → *He's the cleverest boy in the class.* OR: *He's the cleverest of the students.*
- Superlatives with *the least* are not used very frequently: → *It's the least interesting film of all.*

COMPARATIVES and SUPERLATIVES: SPECIAL FORMS

good / well bad / badly far	better worse farther / further	the best the worst the farthest / the furthest	<i>Who is the best singer of the year?</i> <i>That's the worst book I've ever read.</i> <i>I don't want to go any further than this.</i> <i>Is Sydney the farthest city you've been to?</i>
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Comparatives and superlatives (2)

MODIFIERS OF COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

- We use **intensifiers** or **mitigators** to **emphasise** or **reduce** the difference expressed by comparatives and superlatives.

- a lot, a great deal, much, far* are used to intensify the comparative.
I'm much taller than my sister.
We had a great deal more money after we sold our car.
I have far less free time now that I work.
- far* is preferable when followed by 'less', 'fewer' or a plural noun. *Much* is not used with plural nouns:
I have much more luggage than when I left. (not: I have much more suitcases...)
There are far fewer people at the stadium today.
- even* is also used to underline the different degree expressed by the comparative.
The second Hunger Games film is even better than the first.
- by far* is used to emphasise the difference expressed by a superlative:
That was by far the best holiday I'd ever had.
- slightly, a little, a bit* are used to reduce the difference expressed by the comparative:
We'll start a bit later than usual, ok?
I have a little more patience than I used to.
He's feeling slightly better than yesterday.
- not nearly as* is used to intensify a difference expressed by the comparative of equality:
I'm not nearly as clever as you. (= You are much more clever than me)
- just* is used to emphasise similarity before *as* or *like* and means 'exactly like':
I think men talk just as much as women. (exactly like)
I'd like to buy a bigger bag, just like the one I saw in the magazine.
- nearly* or *almost* are used to show that the qualities are similar but not the same:
I'm almost as tall as my dad now. (or: I'm nearly as tall as my dad now)

MORE AND MORE... / LESS AND LESS...

- When the comparative is repeated twice it means that **the difference expressed by the comparative is increasing**:
I'm more and more interested in oriental art. (= I'm increasingly interested in it)
It was late June and days were getting longer and longer.
Today's overprotective parents are making their kids less and less capable of facing problems.
As winter approached there were fewer and fewer flowers in the garden.

THE + COMPARATIVE... THE + COMPARATIVE

- This structure is used when two changes are closely **connected by a cause-effect relationship**. The change may be **parallel** or **inversely related**:
The more you learn, the wiser you get. (parallel improvement)
The less I work, the less satisfied I feel. (parallel decrease)
The less I sleep, the more irritable I feel. (inverse relationship)
- The verbs in this structure are **often omitted** if they can be understood by the context :
The more slowly you drive, the fewer the chances of an accident.
I'm going to invite as many friends as possible. The more, the better.

STATIVE VERBS

A quick guide for students

1 What are stative verbs?

Stative verbs describe a state, not a physical action. They often show thoughts, feelings, possession, senses, or a condition. They are not usually used in continuous (-ing) forms.

2 Common stative verbs



Thoughts & opinions

know, believe, understand, remember, forget, mean, realize, recognize, suppose, think (= believe), doubt



Feelings & emotions

like, love, hate, dislike, prefer, want, wish, need, care, fear, appreciate



Possession & relationships

have (= possess), own, possess, belong, include, contain, consist of, involve, lack, owe



Senses & appearance

see, hear, smell, taste, feel, look, sound, seem, appear, resemble



Existence & condition

be, exist, remain, matter, depend, fit, cost, weigh, measure, deserve

3 Why can -ing change the meaning?

Adding -ing can change a stative verb into an action or temporary activity.

- *I think he is right.* → "think" = opinion (stative)
- *I am thinking about the test.* → "thinking" = mental activity (action)
- *She has a car.* → "has" = possession (stative)
- *She is having lunch.* → "having" = activity (action)

4 Why do some verbs not use -ing?

Many stative verbs do not usually use -ing because they describe a condition or state, not an action in progress.

- ✓ **Correct:** *I know the answer.*
- ✗ **Not usual:** *I am knowing the answer.*

- ✓ **Correct:** *She loves chocolate.*
- ✗ **Not usual:** *She is loving chocolate.*



Rule: Do not usually use stative verbs in -ing forms.

Exception: some verbs can use -ing when the meaning becomes active or temporary.

STATIVE VERBS IN ENGLISH

POSSESSION	SENSE	EMOTION		MENTAL STATE		OTHERS
Have	Feel	Adore	Mind	Appear	Please	Cost
consist	Hear	Care	Need	Astonish	Promise	Depend
Contain	Look	Desire	Wish	Believe	Realise	Fit
Include	See	Dislike	Prefer	Deny	Remember	Matter
Involve	Smell	Hate	Value	Disagree	Recognise	Measure
Own	Sound	Hope	Wish	Doubt	Satisfy	Owe
Pack	Taste	Like		Forget	Suppose	Seem
Possess	Touch	Love		Know		Weigh

What is Register?



Level of formality in language
Depends on situation & audience



Two main types:
Formal & Informal

Formal Language



Formal

Used in professional settings
Academic writing
Official communication



Informal

Used with friends
Family conversations
Casual emails

Context determines word choice

Vocabulary Examples



Formal

Assist → Help
Commence → Start
Residence → House



Informal

Kids → Children
Stuff → Things
Wanna → Want to

Same meaning, different register

Greetings & Closings



Formal

Dear Sir/Madam
Yours sincerely
Best regards



Informal

Hi there!
Cheers
Take care

Match tone to relationship

Asking for Help



Formal

Could you assist me?
I would appreciate your help
May I request your assistance?



Informal

Can you help?
Help me out
Gimme a hand

Politeness level changes with audience

Opinions & Agreement



Formal

I believe that
In my opinion
I concur with



Informal

I think
IMO
Yeah, totally

Choose words for your audience

Formal and informal words often mean the same thing — but they carry a different level of seriousness. Using informal words in a formal essay or exam is like wearing flip-flops to a job interview. The content might be fine. But the impression is wrong.

What is the difference?

Every language has two modes. Think of it like two different outfits for the same person.

INFORMAL LANGUAGE

- Used with friends and family
- Text messages and casual speech
- Relaxed, conversational, natural
- Contractions: don't, can't, it's
- Slang: loads of, pretty, stuff

"The government's new plan is gonna help loads of people get better jobs."

FORMAL LANGUAGE

- Used in essays, exams, official letters
- Academic and professional writing
- Careful, precise, professional
- No contractions: do not, cannot, it is
- Standard vocabulary: numerous, obtain, utilise

"The government's new initiative is expected to assist a significant number of individuals in securing employment."

Formal vs. Informal Choices

Situation	Recommended Choice
Referring to your own actions	Use "we" or "I" in moderation, mainly in methods and discussion.
Describing quantity or size	Use precise terms like "substantial" instead of "a lot."
Writing contractions	Spell out full forms in the main text.
Using idioms or slang	Replace with literal, direct phrasing.

The 3 biggest informal mistakes in formal writing

1 Contractions

A contraction is when two words are joined with an apostrophe — don't, can't, won't, it's. They are perfectly normal in speech. But in formal writing, they signal carelessness.

INFORMAL X

The policy can't work because it doesn't address the root cause.

FORMAL ✓

The policy cannot work because it does not address the root cause.

2 Vague quantity words

'A lot of', 'tons of', 'loads of' — these are fine in conversation. In a formal essay, they make your argument sound weak and imprecise.

INFORMAL X

A lot of people are affected by this problem.

FORMAL ✓

A significant proportion of the population is affected by this issue.

3 Personal opinion phrases

'I think', 'I feel', 'in my opinion' — in IELTS Academic Writing, you should present ideas as facts or logical arguments, not as personal feelings.

INFORMAL X

I think the government should invest more in education.

FORMAL ✓

It could be argued that greater investment in education is essential.

Avoid contractions (don't, can't, won't), slang (loads of, tons of, pretty), informal connectors (also, plus, so), vague words (thing, stuff, get, put), and first-person casual phrases (I think, I feel, in my opinion). Replace them with their formal equivalents.

Informal (avoid)	Formal (use instead)
a lot of / lots of	a significant number of / numerous / a considerable amount of
get	obtain / receive / acquire
give	provide / offer / present
show	demonstrate / illustrate / indicate
find out	discover / determine / ascertain
look into	investigate / examine / analyse
go up / rise	increase / escalate / surge
go down / fall	decrease / decline / diminish
big / huge	significant / substantial / considerable
small / tiny	minor / minimal / negligible
bad	detrimental / adverse / unfavourable
good	beneficial / advantageous / favourable
need	require / necessitate
help	assist / facilitate / support
use	utilise / employ / apply
think	consider / believe / argue / contend
say / tell	state / assert / claim / maintain
start / begin	initiate / commence / establish
end / stop	conclude / cease / terminate
make	produce / generate / create / construct
try	attempt / endeavour / strive
kids / children	children / young people / minors
a bit	slightly / somewhat / marginally
really / very	extremely / particularly / significantly
okay / fine	acceptable / adequate / satisfactory
also / plus	furthermore / moreover / in addition
but / so	however / therefore / consequently / thus
because	because / since / as / owing to the fact that
I think	It could be argued that / It is evident that
in my opinion	From this perspective / It appears that