

Grammar: Superlatives

Intermediate English, Week Three, Winter 2021



What is the **tallest** mountain in the world?

The tallest mountain is Mt. Everest. It is between Nepal and China, and its height is 29,029 feet (8,848 meters).

Superlative adjectives

- A superlative adjective tells us what is the “most” or “number one” of something
 - Russia is the **biggest** country in the world.
 - I think Lake Superior is the **most beautiful** place in Minnesota.
- We often use phrases like “...in the world” or “...in the USA” after it
 - Kilimanjaro is the **tallest** mountain in Africa.
 - She is the **most intelligent** student in our class.
- Superlative adjectives have two forms: **-est** or **most**
 - Skydiving is the **most dangerous** sport.
 - The **shortest** person in the world is 21.5 inches tall.

Superlatives with **-est**

- If an adjective has **one syllable**, we use **-est** to make the superlative
 - Examples: tall → tallest; short → shortest; cold → coldest
- For adjectives that end with **-e**, just add **-st**
 - Nice → nicest; cute → cutest
- Double the last letter if an adjective ends with consonant-vowel-consonant
 - Hot → hottest; big → biggest
- For adjectives ending with **-y** (**one or two syllables**), change **-y** to **-i** and then add **-est**
 - Easy → easiest; busy → busiest; happy → happiest

Superlatives with *most*

- If an adjective has two or more syllables and does not end with –y, use *most + adjective*
 - The cakes at this bakery are the *most delicious* in St. Paul.
 - I think fall is the *most beautiful* season.
- You don't need to also use –est. Only use *most*!
 - English is the *most interesting* class for me.
 - ~~NOT English is the most interestingest class~~

To summarize -

- If an adjective has **one syllable**, add **-est**. Change the spelling if needed.
- If an adjective has **two syllables**, use **-iest** if it ends with **-y**. If it doesn't have **-y**, use *most*
- If an adjective has **three or more syllables**, use *most + adjective*

Best, worst, and farthest

- There are three adjectives that don't follow these rules: good, bad, and far
- The superlative for *good* is *best*
 - This is the best Japanese restaurant in Minnesota.
- For *bad*, use *worst*
 - He is the worst player on our baseball team.
- *Far* becomes *farthest* or *furthest*
 - Australia is the farthest country from the United States.

Let's practice! Change these adjectives to superlatives

- Colorful
- Heavy
- Hot
- Dangerous
- Bad
- Wide
- Far
- Nervous
- Most colorful
- Heaviest
- Hottest
- Most dangerous
- Worst
- Widest
- Farthest
- Most nervous

Find and correct five mistakes

Yesterday, I went shopping with my friends. We decided to go to the mall that is the ~~most close~~^{closest} to my house. I bought a lot of clothes and shoes. The ~~more~~^{most} expensive thing I bought was a new dress, for \$60. The ~~most~~ cheapest thing I bought was a hat. It was on sale for only \$5!

After shopping, we decided to have lunch at a Mexican restaurant. I think tacos are the ~~deliciousest~~^{most delicious} food, but my friend Andrea thinks tamales are the ~~goodest~~^{best}. After lunch, we went home. It was a good day.

What is the highest waterfall in the world?

- a) Yosemite Falls (California, USA)
- b) Tugela Falls (South Africa)
- c) Vinnufossen (Norway)
- d) Angel Falls (Venezuela)

Angel Falls is the highest waterfall. It is 3212 feet (979 m) high.



What is the deepest lake in the world?

- a) Lake Baikal, Russia
- b) Lake Superior, USA / Canada
- c) Tanganyika, Tanzania / Congo
- d) Lake Como, Italy

The deepest lake is Lake Baikal, in Russia. It is 5387 feet (1642 meters) deep!



What is the coldest temperature on earth?

- a) -97 degrees
- b) -110 degrees
- c) -119 degrees
- d) -128 degrees

The coldest temperature recorded on Earth was -128 degrees Fahrenheit (-89 degrees Celsius), in Vostok Station, Antarctica.



How much is the most expensive car?

- a) \$5.8 million
- b) \$18.7 million
- c) \$25.2 million
- d) \$50 million

The Bugatti “Voiture Noire” is the most expensive car in the world. Only two cars are built every year.

