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### STUDY GUIDE: GRAMMAR: ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS

There are eight parts of speech. This study guide will deal with two of these parts of speech, the adjective and the adverb.

#### ADJECTIVES

Adjectives are words that are used to describe a noun or a pronoun. Adjectives answer these questions about nouns or pronouns:

- 1) Which one? that cat
- 2) What kind? enormous lawn
- 3) How many? several monsters
- 4) How much? fifteen candles

**ARTICLES:** The three most common adjectives are A, AN, and THE. These three adjectives are called ARTICLES. "The" is the definite article because it refers to a specific person, place, or thing. "A" and "an" are called the indefinite articles because they are not as specific.

"A" is used before nouns or other adjectives that begin with a consonant sound. "An" precedes nouns or adjectives that begin with a vowel sound. The word "apple" begins with the short "a" vowel sound, so we use the article "an" before apple (i.e. an apple). "Honor" begins with the consonant "h," but this consonant makes a vowel sound, so we use "an" before honor (i.e. an honor).

Other examples: an excellent program, a big balloon, a pig, a calculator, an honest politician, a large selection, an interesting person, a small basket, an egg, a typewriter.

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TYPES OF ADJECTIVES: proper adjectives, compound adjectives, possessive adjectives, indefinite adjectives, demonstrative adjectives, interrogative adjectives, predicate adjectives, and articles.

We have already addressed articles. Let's take a better look at the remaining types of adjectives, beginning with the proper adjectives.

- A. PROPER ADJECTIVES: Proper adjectives can be either a proper noun that is used as an adjective or an adjective that has been formed from a proper noun.

Examples of proper adjectives:

CHINESE customs    ILLINOIS highway    INDIAN jewelry  
ARIZONA company    SEPTEMBER meeting    AZTEC culture

- B. COMPOUND ADJECTIVES: Compound adjectives are adjectives that are formed by joining more than one word together in either a closed fashion or with a hyphen.

Examples of compound adjectives: NEARSIGHTED student, ONE-SIDED competition, OLD-FASHIONED custom, LIGHTWEIGHT champion

- C. POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVES: Possessive adjectives are pronouns that are used to modify a noun. The following pronouns are often used as possessive adjectives:

his, her, its, our, my, your, their

These possessive pronouns are used either before or after a noun to indicate who owns the object.

Examples of possessive pronouns that are used as possessive adjectives: MY dog, THEIR house, YOUR mother, HIS life, ITS history, OUR values

- D. INDEFINITE ADJECTIVES: An indefinite adjective is an indefinite pronoun that has been used to modify a noun.

Examples of indefinite adjectives: EACH girl, NEITHER cat, MOST people, EVERY individual

- E. DEMONSTRATIVE ADJECTIVES: Demonstrative adjectives are the four demonstrative pronouns (this, that, these, and those) when they are used to modify a noun.

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Examples of demonstrative adjectives: THIS book, THESE marbles, THOSE coupons, THAT table

F. INTERROGATIVE ADJECTIVES: The interrogative adjectives are the words which, what, and whose when they are placed before a noun.

Examples of interrogative adjectives: WHAT name did you select? Which soft drink is mine? WHOSE answer was correct?

G. PREDICATE ADJECTIVES: Predicate adjectives follow linking verbs, and describe or modify the subject of the sentence.

Examples of predicate adjectives:

I felt HOT and ANGRY. My sister is RESTLESS. The winter temperatures were very COLD. My cat appears ANGRY.

In each of the above examples, the capitalized words are predicate adjectives. They each follow a linking verb and help to describe or modify the subject.

THE DEGREES OF AN ADJECTIVE: Every adjective has 3 degrees:

- 1) the positive degree
- 2) the comparative degree
- 3) the superlative degree

The positive degree is the basic adjective form: happy, cold, understanding, tall, and beautiful.

The comparative degree compares two things. In most cases, the comparative degree of a one- or two-syllable adjective is formed by adding an -er to the end of that adjective.

Example:	tall,	TALLER
	brave,	BRAVER
	bold,	BOLDER
	busy,	BUSIER

If the positive form of the one- or two-syllable adjective ends in a "y" as in the case of "busy" above, the "y" is usually changed to an "i" before adding the -er ending.

If the positive form of an adjective is three or more syllables, the word "more" is usually placed before the positive adjective form to create the comparative form. The -er ending is NOT added to the adjective.

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Examples: popular, MORE popular  
secluded, MORE secluded  
beautiful, MORE beautiful  
interesting, MORE interesting

The superlative form compares more than two different people, places, or things. In most cases, the superlative form of a one- or two-syllable adjective is formed by adding the -est ending to the positive adjective form.

Examples: simple, SIMPLEST  
Clean, CLEANEST  
Sad, SADDEST

If the positive form is 3 or more syllables, the superlative form is usually made by placing the word "most" before the adjective.

Examples: beautiful, MOST beautiful  
creative, MOST creative  
casual, MOST casual

**Study these examples that show all 3 degrees of these adjectives!**

<u>POSITIVE</u>	<u>COMPARATIVE</u>	<u>SUPERLATIVE</u>
1. cold	colder	coldest
2. negative	more negative	most negative
3. lonely	lonelier	loneliest
4. transparent	more transparent	most transparent
5. scary	scariest	scariest
6. prejudiced	more prejudiced	most prejudiced

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As always, there are some exceptions to these general rules. Study these exceptions!

<u>POSITIVE</u>	<u>COMPARATIVE</u>	<u>SUPERLATIVE</u>
1. good	better	best
2. many	more	most
3. far	farther	farthest
4. hopeless	more hopeless	most careful
5. careful	more careful	most careful
6. well	better	best
7. bad	worse	worst

**PARTICIPLES:** A participle is a verb form that is used as an adjective. There are two types or participles: present participles and past participles. Present participles end with the -ing ending. Past participles end in -ed. The capitalized words below are participles that have been used as adjectives.

Examples: The **SCREAMING** child ran toward his room.  
The **DISTURBED** animal crouched nearby.  
The **SPREADING** epidemic spared nobody.  
The **ELECTED** official appeared prepared.

### ADVERBS

Adverbs modify other words, just like adjectives. There are three parts of speech that an adverb might modify:

1. a verb
2. an adjective
3. another adverb

Most often, adverbs modify verbs. When adverbs modify verbs, they answer these questions:

1. Where? Mark lives **NEARBY**.  
I walked **INSIDE**.

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2. When? We called Grandmother YESTERDAY.  
Let's leave NOW.  
My sister arrived EARLY.
3. In what way? She sang BEAUTIFULLY.  
Mary worked INTENTLY on her project.  
The dog ran RAPIDLY.
4. To what extent? The house was TOTALLY destroyed.  
She was EXTREMELY disturbed.

When adverbs modify adjectives or other adverbs, they answer the questions "To What Extent."

Example: David was VERY sensitive. (In this example, the word VERY is an adverb that tells how sensitive David was. It is an adverb that modifies sensitive, a predicate adjective.

Martha sings VERY softly. (Here, softly is an adverb that tells how Martha sings. Very is another adverb that tells HOW softly she sings. Very modifies the adverb softly.)

MANY ADVERBS END WITH THE LETTERS -LY.

Examples: The detective climbed the stairs QUIETLY.  
Mother screamed FRANTICALLY.  
We CAUTIOUSLY approached the strange animal.

Like adjectives, adverbs have three degrees or comparison:

1. positive
2. comparative
3. superlative

The POSITIVE degree is used when no comparison is being made. It is the regular form of the adverb (i.e. quietly, sadly, late, violently, persistently).

The COMPARATIVE degree is used when two things are being compared. To form the comparative degree, either add an -er ending to the positive form, or use the positive form preceded by the word "MORE." As with adjectives, the -er ending is most often added to the positive form, if the positive form is either one or two syllables, form the comparative by placing the word "more" before the positive form (i.e. eagerly, MORE EAGERLY; gracefully, MORE GRACEFULLY; favorably, MORE FAVORABLY).

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The SUPERLATIVE degree is used when three or more things are being compared. It is usually formed by adding an -est to a positive adverb, and that positive adverb has only one or two syllables. If the positive adverb has more than two syllables, the superlative is formed by adding the word MOST before the positive form (i.e. MOST EAGERLY, MOST GRACEFULLY, MOST IMPORTANTLY).

