

Unit 101

Comparison (1) - cheaper, more expensive etc.

a Study these examples:

Let's go by car. It's **cheaper**.
Don't go by train. It's **more expensive**.

Cheaper and **more expensive** are *comparative* forms.

After comparatives we use **than**:

- It's **cheaper** to go by car **than** to go by train.

For **than** see also **Unit 103**.

b We use **-er** for the comparative of short adjectives and adverbs:

cheap/cheaper hard/harder large/larger thin/thinner

We prefer **-er** with some two-syllable adjectives, especially adjectives ending in **-y**. For example:

lucky/luckier funny/funnier easy/easier pretty/prettier
and also: quiet/quieter clever/cleverer narrow/narrower simple/simpler

- The examination was **easier** than we expected.
- It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere **quieter**?

For spelling rules see **Appendix 3**

c We use **more ...** (*not* '-er') for other two-syllable adjectives and longer adjectives:

more modern more serious more expensive more comfortable

- **More expensive** hotels are usually **more comfortable** than **cheaper** ones.
- Her illness was **more serious** than we at first thought.

We also use **more ...** for adverbs which end in **-ly**:

more slowly more seriously more quietly more carefully

- Could you speak **more slowly**, please?

We also say **more often**:

- I don't play tennis much now. I used to play **more often**.

But we say **earlier** (*not* 'more early'):

- You're always tired in the mornings. You should go to bed **earlier**.

d Before the comparative of adjectives and adverbs you can use:

a bit a little much a lot far (= a lot)

- Let's go by car. It's **much** (*or a lot*) **cheaper**.
- Don't go by train. It's **much** (*or a lot*) **more expensive**.
- Ann works **a lot** (*or much*) **harder** than most of her friends.
- Could you speak **a bit** (*or a little*) **more slowly**?
- Her illness was **far more serious** than we at first thought.

