



# COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

Seventeenth lesson – Dix-septième leçon

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# INTRODUCTION

- **Comparatives** express relative **superiority**, **inferiority** and **equality** between two or more things, people or ideas.
- The **superlative** expresses which object, person or concept is the **most** or **least** of all those being compared.



# 1. THE COMPARATIVE FORMS

## 1.1 Overview

	Superiority [+]	Equality [=]	Inferiority [-]
Adjective	<b>Plus adj. que</b>	<b>Aussi adj. que</b>	<b>Moins adj. que</b>
Adverb	<b>Plus adv. que</b>	<b>Aussi adv. que</b>	<b>Moins adv. que</b>
Noun	<b>Plus de noun que</b>	<b>Autant de noun que</b>	<b>Moins de noun que</b>
Verb	<b>Verb plus que</b>	<b>Verb autant que</b>	<b>Verb moins que</b>

# 1. THE COMPARATIVE FORMS

## ○ 1.3 With adverbs

- *Paul court **plus vite que** Thoko.*
- *Paul runs more quickly than Thoko.*
  
- *Thoko court **aussi vite que** Paul.*
- *Thoko runs as quickly as Paul.*
  
- *Thoko court **moins vite que** Paul.*
- *Thoko runs less quickly than Paul*



# 1. THE COMPARATIVE FORMS

## ○ 1.4 With nouns

- *Nelson a **plus d'amis que** Sam.*
- *Nelson has more friends than Sam.*
  
- *Sam a **autant d'amis que** Nelson.*
- *Sam has as many friends as Nelson.*
  
- *Sam a **moins d'amis que** Nelson.*
- *Sam has fewer friends than Nelson.*



# 1. THE COMPARATIVE FORMS

## ○ 1.5 With verbs

- *Jane lit **plus qu'**Anne.*
- *Jane reads more than Anne.*
  
- *Anne lit **autant que** Jane.*
- *Anne reads as much as Jane.*
  
- *Anne lit **moins que** Jane.*
- *Anne reads less than Jane.*



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

### ○ 2.1 With Bon

- In comparative constructions **bon** (good) is an **adjective** and means *good, suitable, useful*.

- Its forms are **irregular**.

- The comparative form of bon is **meilleur**.

meilleur	meilleure	Meilleurs	meilleures
<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>f. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>	<i>f. pl.</i>





## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- **Bon** is **irregular** in the **superioir comparative**.
- In the inferiority or equality constructions, it follows the normal rules.



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- *Tes notes sont **meilleures que** mes notes.*
- *Your marks are better than my marks.*
  
- *Tes notes sont **moins bonnes que** mes notes.*
- *Your marks are worse than my marks. (literally less good)*
  
- *Tes notes sont **aussi bonnes que** mes notes.*
- *Your marks are as good as my marks.*



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- **Bien** is also used in comparative constructions with **être** (or verbs such *être*), and means *good, suitable, useful ...*
  - *Tes gâteaux sont **bien** mais mes gâteaux sont **meilleurs**.*
  - *Your cakes are good but my cakes are better.*
  - *Ce roman est **bien** mais la pièce de théâtre est **meilleure**.*
  - *This novel is good, but the play is better.*



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- **2.2 With mauvais**

- **Mauvais** (bad) has both **regular** and **irregular** forms for the comparative.



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- **Regular forms:**

<b>mauvais</b>	<b>mauvaise</b>	<b>mauvais</b>	<b>mauvaises</b>
<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>f. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>	<i>f. pl.</i>



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- *Mes notes sont **plus mauvaises que** tes notes.*
- *My marks are worse than your marks.*  
*(literally more bad)*
  
- *Mes notes sont **moins mauvaises que** tes notes.*
- *My marks are better than your marks.*  
*(literally less bad)*
  
- *Mes notes sont **aussi mauvaises que** tes notes.*
- *My marks are as bad as your marks.*



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- **Irregular forms:**

pire	pires
m./f. sg.	m./f. pl.



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- *Mes notes sont **pires que** tes notes.*
- *My marks are worse than your marks.*





## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

### ○ 2.3 With bien

- When bien (*well*) is used as an **adverb** (i.e. when it refers to as verb, it has a special comparative and superlative form: **mieux** (*better*))
- This irregularity only applies to the constructions of superiority, inferiority and equality.



## 2. THE COMPARATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS, BIEN

- *Je danse **bien**.*
- *I dance well.*
  
- *Je danse **mieux que** toi.*
- *I dance better than you.*
  
- *Je danse **moins bien que** toi.*
- *Literally: I dance less well than you.*
  
- *Je danse **aussi bien que** lui.*
- *I dance as well as him.*



## 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

### 3.1 Definition

- Superlatives express **absolute superiority or inferiority**.
  - They require the definite article.
  - The **definite article** always **agrees** with adjectives and consequently with the subject of the sentence.



### 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

- In constructions with adverbs, the adverb follows the verb.
- Remember that **adverbs do not agree** with words they refer to.
- This is why, **le** is the only article form used in superlative constructions with adverbs.
- This rule applies also to superlative constructions with **nouns** and **verbs**.



### 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS – OVERVIEW

	Superiority [+] most	Inferiority [-] least
Adjective	<b>La/le/les plus</b> adj.	<b>Le/la/les moins</b> adj.
Adverb	<b>Le plus</b> adv.	<b>Le moins</b> adv.
Noun	<b>Le plus de</b> noun	<b>Le moins de</b> noun
Verb	Verb <b>le plus</b>	Verb <b>le moins</b>



## 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

### ○ 3.3 With adjectives

- *Jane est **la plus** belle de la famille!*
- *Jane is the most beautiful in the family!*
  
- *Paul est **le plus** beau de la famille!*
- *Paul is the most handsome in the family!*
  
- *David et Thoko sont **les plus** intelligents de la famille!*
- *David and Thoko are the most intelligent in the family!*



### 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

- *Anne est **la moins** intéressant de la classe.*
- *Anne is the least interesting in the classroom.*
  
- *David est **le moins** intéressant de la classe.*
- *David is the least interesting in the classroom.*
  
- *Jono et Clive sont **les moins** sérieux de la classe.*
- *Jone and Clive are the least serious in the classroom.*



### 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

Notes:

- In the previous sentences **le/la/les plus** and **le/la/les moins** refer to the **subject** of the sentence.
- Consequently, the definite **article agrees** in gender and number with the subjects as well as with adjectives related to them.





## 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

### ○ 3.4 With adverbs

- *Dans ma famille, c'est mon frère qui lit **le plus** vite.*
- *In my family, it is my brother who reads the fastest.*
  
- *Et c'est ma sœur qui comprend **le moins** vite.*
- *And it's my sister who understands the slowest. (literally the least fast)*



### 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

Notes:

- In the previous sentences **le plus/le moins** refer to the **adverb** (not to subject: **son frère/sa sœur**).
- This is why the definite article remains **le** (it never agrees with adverbs).



## 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

### ○ 3.5 With nouns

- *Dans mon quartier, c'est Nelson qui a **le plus** d'amis.*
- *In my neighbourhood, it's Nelson who has the most friends.*
  
- *Et c'est Elouise qui a **le moins** de succès.*
- *And it's Elouise who has the least success.*



### 3. THE SUPERLATIVE FORMS

- In the sentences in the previous slide **le plus/le moins** refer to the **verb** (not to subject: **Anne, Jane, Pierre, David**).
- This is why the definite article remains **le** (it never agrees with verbs)



## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

### ○ 4.1 With **bon**

- As with its comparative forms, **bon** (*good*) is irregular in its superlative constructions.



## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

- The superlative of **bon** is **le meilleur**:

Le meilleur	La meilleure	Les meilleurs	Les meilleures
m. sg.	f. sg.	m. pl.	f. pl.



## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

- *Mes notes sont **les meilleures**.*
  - *My marks are the best.*



## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

### ○ 4.2 With mauvais

- **Mauvais** (*bad*) has both regular and irregular forms for the superlative





## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

- **Regular forms:**

<b>Le plus mauvais</b>	<b>La plus mauvaise</b>	<b>Les plus mauvais</b>	<b>Les plus mauvaises</b>
m. sg.	f. sg.	m. pl.	f. pl.



## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

### ○ Irregular forms:

Le pire	La pire	Les pires
m. sg.	f. sg.	m./f. pl.



## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

- *Mes notes sont **les pires**.*
- *My marks are the worse.*



## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

### ○ 4.3 With bien

- The adverb **bien** (*well*) has a special superlative form: **le mieux** (*the best*).
- This irregular form only applies to the construction of superiority.



## 4. THE SUPERLATIVE OF BON, MAUVAIS AND BIEN

- *C'est Marie qui explique **le mieux** la grammaire.*
- *It's Marie who explains grammar the best.*
  
- *C'est Paul qui explique **le moins bien** la grammaire.*
- *It's Paul who explains grammar the worst.*



C'est tout pour aujourd'hui!

Au revoir!

Merci!

