

# Comparison 2 (much better / any better, better and better / the sooner the better)

Before comparatives you can use:

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

- Let's go by car. It's much cheaper. (or a lot cheaper)
- 'How do you feel?' 'Much better, thanks.'
- Don't go by train. It's a lot more expensive. (or much more expensive)
- Could you speak a bit more slowly? (or a little more slowly)
- This bag is slightly heavier than the other one.
- Her illness was far more serious than we thought at first. (or much more serious / a lot more serious)

You can use any and no + comparative (any longer / no bigger etc.):

- I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting any longer. (= not even a little longer)
- We expected their house to be very big, but it's no bigger than ours. or ... it isn't any bigger than ours. (= not even a little bigger)
- How do you feel now? Do you feel any better?
- This hotel is better than the other one, and it's no more expensive.

Better and better / more and more etc.

We repeat comparatives (better and better etc.) to say that something changes continuously:

- Your English is improving. It's getting better and better.
- The city is growing fast. It's getting bigger and bigger.
- Cathy got more and more bored in her job. In the end she left.
- These days more and more people are learning English.

The ... the ...

You can say the (sooner/bigger/more etc.) the better:

- 'What time shall we leave?' 'The sooner the better.' (= as soon as possible)
- A: What sort of box do you want? A big one?  
B: Yes, the bigger the better. (= as big as possible)
- When you're travelling, the less luggage you have the better.

We also use the ... the ... to say that one thing depends on another thing:

- The warmer the weather, the better I feel. (= if the weather is warmer, I feel better)
- The sooner we leave, the earlier we will arrive.
- The younger you are, the easier it is to learn.
- The more expensive the hotel, the better the service.
- The more electricity you use, the higher your bill will be.
- The more I thought about the plan, the less I liked it.

Older and elder

The comparative of old is older:

- David looks older than he really is.

You can use elder (or older) when you talk about people in a family. You can say (my/your etc.) elder sister/brother/daughter/son:

- My elder sister is a TV producer. (or My older sister ...)

We say 'my elder sister', but we do not say that 'somebody is elder':

- My sister is older than me. (not elder than me)

106.1 Use the words in brackets to complete the sentences. Use much / a bit etc. + a comparative form. Use than where necessary.

- Her illness was much more serious than we thought at first. (much / serious)
- This bag is too small. I need something ..... (much / big)
- I'm afraid the problem is ..... it seems. (much / complicated)
- It was very hot yesterday. Today it's ..... (a bit / cool)
- I enjoyed our visit to the museum. It was ..... I expected. (far / interesting)
- You're driving too fast. Can you drive ..... ? (a bit / slowly)
- It's ..... to learn a foreign language in a country where it is spoken. (a lot / easy)
- I thought she was younger than me, but in fact she's ..... (slightly / old)

106.2 Complete the sentences using any/no + comparative. Use than where necessary.

- I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting any longer .
- I'm sorry I'm a bit late, but I couldn't get here .....
- This shop isn't expensive. The prices are ..... anywhere else.
- I need to stop for a rest. I can't walk .....
- The traffic isn't particularly bad today. It's ..... usual.

106.3 Complete the sentences using the structure in Section C (... and ...).

- Cathy got more and more bored in her job. In the end she left. (bored)
- That hole in your sweater is getting ..... (big)
- My bags seemed to get ..... as I carried them. (heavy)
- As I waited for my interview, I became ..... (nervous)
- As the day went on, the weather got ..... (bad)
- Health care is becoming ..... (expensive)
- Since Anna went to Canada, her English has got ..... (good)
- As the conversation went on, Paul became ..... (talkative)

106.4 These sentences are like those in Section D. Use the words in brackets (in the correct form) to complete the sentences.

- I like warm weather.  
The warmer the weather, the better I feel . (feel)
- I didn't really like him when we first met.  
But the more I got to know him, ..... (like)
- If you're in business, you want to make a profit.  
The more goods you sell, ..... (profit)
- It's hard to concentrate when you're tired.  
The more tired you are, ..... (hard)
- Kate had to wait a very long time.  
The longer she waited, ..... (impatient / become)

106.5 Which is correct, older or elder? Or both of them?

- My older / elder sister is a TV producer. (older and elder are both correct)
- I'm surprised Diane is only 25. I thought she was older / elder.
- Jane's younger sister is still at school. Her older / elder sister is a nurse.
- Martin is older / elder than his brother.