

# LES COMPARATIFS

**I. Comparatives** come in three varieties\*:

<b>Superiority</b>	<b>plus... que</b>	more... than <i>or</i> [ <i>adjective</i> ]er than
<b>Inferiority</b>	<b>moins... que</b>	less... than
<b>Equality</b>	<b>aussi... que</b>	as... as
	<b>autant que</b>	as much/many as

\* **There are exceptions:** See **bon, bien,** and **mauvais,** below.

TO COMPARE ADJECTIVES		
plus ___ que ___	moins ___ que ___	aussi ___ que ___
Jean est <b>plus</b> grand <b>que</b> Luc.		Jean is taller than Luc.
Jean est <b>moins</b> fier <b>que</b> Luc.		Jean is less proud than Luc.
Jean est <b>aussi</b> intelligent <b>que</b> travailleur.		Jean is as smart as (he is) hard-working.
Jean est <b>plus</b> sympa <b>qu'</b> intelligent.		Jean is nicer than (he is) smart.
Jean est <b>moins</b> stricte <b>qu'</b> avant.		Jean is less strict than before.
TO COMPARE ADVERBS		
Jean lit <b>plus</b> lentement <b>que</b> Luc.		Jean reads more slowly than Luc.
Jean écrit <b>moins</b> souvent <b>que</b> Luc.		Jean writes less often than Luc.
Jean travaille <b>aussi</b> vite <b>que</b> gentiment.		Jean works as quickly as (he does) helpfully.
Jean mange <b>plus</b> poliment <b>qu'</b> avant.		Jean eats more politely than before.
TO COMPARE VERBS		
___ plus que ___	___ moins que ___	___ autant que ___
Jean travaille <b>plus que</b> Luc.		Jean works more than Luc.
Jean a étudié <b>autant que</b> Luc.		Jean studied as much as Luc.
Jean lit <b>moins qu'</b> avant.		Jean reads less than before.
Jean rit <b>autant qu'</b> il pleure.		Jean laughs as much as he cries.
TO COMPARE NOUNS		
plus de ___ que (de)	moins de ___ que (de)	autant de ___ que (de)
Jean a <b>plus de</b> livres <b>que</b> Luc.		Jean has more books than Luc.
Jean veut <b>autant d'</b> amis <b>que</b> Luc.		Jean wants as many friends as Luc.
Jean a <b>moins de</b> livres <b>que de</b> jouets.		Jean has fewer books than toys.
Jean a <b>autant d'</b> amis <b>que d'</b> ennemis.		Jean has as many friends as enemies.
Jean connaît <b>moins de</b> gens <b>qu'</b> avant.		Jean knows fewer people than (he did) before.

Note the slightly differing constructions for the various parts of speech, particularly the addition of **de** in noun comparisons:

\*When using plus or moins in this construction, the 'ne explétif' is required.

i.e. : « J'aime nager plus que je n'aime regarder la télé. »

Adjectives	plus/moins/aussi + <i>adjective</i> + que + noun/pronoun
	plus/moins/aussi + <i>adjective</i> + que + <i>adjective</i>
	plus/moins/aussi + <i>adjective</i> + que + temporal adverb
Adverbs	plus/moins/aussi + <i>adverb</i> + que + noun/pronoun
	plus/moins/aussi + <i>adverb</i> + que + <i>adverb</i>
Nouns	plus/moins/autant + <i>de</i> + <i>noun</i> + que + noun/pronoun
	plus/moins/autant + <i>de</i> + <i>noun</i> + que + <i>de</i> + <i>noun</i>
	plus/moins/autant + <i>de</i> + <i>noun</i> + que + temporal adv.
Verbs	<i>verb</i> + plus/moins/autant que + noun
	<i>verb</i> + plus/moins/autant que + temporal adverb
	<i>verb</i> + plus/moins/autant que + pronoun + <i>verb</i> *

**II. Exceptions: Bon, bien, and mauvais** are exceptions to the above rules. **Bon bien** and **mauvais** have irregular forms for the comparative.

IRREG. COMPARATIVES			
<b>ADJECTIF</b>	<del>plus bon que</del>	meilleur(e) que	better than
<b>ADVERB</b>	<del>plus bien que</del>	mieux que	better than
<b>ADJECTIF ou ADVERBE</b>	<del>plus mauvais que</del>	pire que	worse than

Les voitures japonaises sont <b>meilleures que</b> les voitures américaines.	Japanese cars are better than American cars.
Il s'habille <b>mieux que</b> moi.	He dresses better than I.
La grippe est <b>pire que</b> le rhume	The flu is worse than a cold.
Sarkozy gouverne <b>pire que</b> Bush	Sarkozy governs worst than Bush.

### LES SUPERLATIFS

Superlatives are formed with a definite article (le, la, les) + plus or moins. Depending on the adjective, the superlative may be placed before or after the noun. Most adjectives follow the noun they modify and thus the superlatives do too. With adjectives that normally precede the noun, you can place the superlative either before or after the noun. Note that when the superlative follows the noun, the sentence will have two definite articles.

Brigitte court <b>la plus</b> vite.	Brigitte runs the fastest.
C'est moi qui cours <b>le moins</b> vite.	It's me who runs the slowest.
Alice est la personne <b>la plus</b> intelligente <u>qui</u> travaille ici.	Alice is the most intelligent person that works here.
Alice est la personne <b>la plus</b> intelligente <u>que</u> je connaisse. [subjunctive statement of opinion]	Alice is the most intelligent personne that I know.
Thomas est le garçon <b>le plus</b> gentil <u>de</u> l'école.	Thomas is the kindest boy in school.
C'est la ville <b>la plus</b> intéressante <u>du</u> monde.	It's the most interesting city in the world.
Vous avez acheté <b>la plus</b> jolie maison <u>de</u> la rue. OU Vous avez acheté la maison <b>la plus</b> jolie <u>de</u> la rue.	You bought the prettiest house on the street.
Elle est <b>la plus</b> jeune fille à Pearson. OU Elle est la fille <b>la plus</b> jeune à Pearson.	She is the youngest girl at Pearson.

Important notes :

- 1) Notice that you use 'de' to say in/of after the superlative.
- 2) The word 'that' in French can be 'que' or 'qui'. Use 'que' before a noun or subject pronoun (je,tu,il,elle, etc.) and 'qui' before a verb.
- 3) If the superlative uses que and implies you are giving your opinion, the statement of opinion needs to be in the subjunctive.

IRREG. SUPERLATIVES		
<del>le/la/les plus bon</del>	le/la/les meilleur(e)	the best
<del>le/la/les plus bien</del>	le/la/les mieux	the best
<del>le/la/les plus mauvais</del>	le/la/les pire	the worst

Il est <b>le meilleur*</b> prof <u>de</u> l'école.	He is the best teacher in the school
De tous les étudiants à notre lycée, c'est elle <u>qui</u> danse <b>le mieux*</b> .	Of all the students at our high school, it's her that dances the best.
Vous êtes <b>les pires*</b> menteurs <u>que</u> je connais. [indicative statement of fact]	You are the worst liars that I know.

\* In the superlative, **meilleur(e)** and **pire** can only be placed in front of the noun they modify, while **mieux** is placed after the verb it modifies.