**Adjectives**

**There are different types of adjectives:**

* Gradable adjectives
* Ungradable adjectives (non-gradable/extreme adjectives)
* Absolute adjectives

Most adjectives are gradable, this means we can have different levels of that quality, it can be graded. For example, you can be a bit cold, very cold or extremely cold. We can make them weaker or stronger with modifiers. Some adjectives have both a gradable and ungradable form therefore we don’t always modify them with adverbs of degree.

*Gradable: Big Ungradable: Huge*

*Gradable: Cold Ungradable: Freezing*

*Gradable: Hot Ungradable: Boiling*

*Gradable: Happy Ungradable: Delighted*

Some adjectives are ungradable, meaning they cannot be graded or are absolute, these adjectives have a very strong meaning although we can make them stronger with modifiers like:  absolutely, totally or completely.

Absolute adjectives mean that something is **complete**, it can't be **more complete,** this is impossible. If a person is **dead**, he/she can't be **more dead.** Dead is dead and that's it.

Absolute adjectives do not normally have a comparative or superlative form.

**Absolute Adjectives list**

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| absolute | ancient | astounding | awful |
| basic | wrong | brilliant | certain |
| chemical | complete | dead | devoid |
| digital | domestic | empty | enormous |
| entire | essential | excellent | exhausted |
| fascinating | fantastic | fatal | filthy |
| final | unique | full | furious |
| giant | gigantic | gorgeous | harmless |
| hideous | hilarious | horrible | huge |
| immortal | impossible | incredible | meaningful |
| nuclear | obvious | packed | perfect |
| pregnant | pure | square | spotless |
| starving | superior | terrible | terrified |
| thrilled | tiny | ultimate |  |
| universal | wonderful | right |  |

**Adverbs of degree**

Adverbs of degree tell us about the intensity of something. Adverbs of degree are usually placed before the adjective, adverb, or verb that they modify, although there are some exceptions.

**Highest Degree Adverbs**

Common Adverbs of Degree

Completely Absolutely Totally Utterly

* Adverbs of highest degree are only used with Ungradable and Absolute adjectives.

*It was absolutely freezing last night.*

**High Degree Adverbs**

Very and Really indicate high degree.

* **Very** is an adverb of high degree and is used with gradable adjectives.
* **Really** is an adverb of high degree and can be used with both gradable and most ungradable adjectives, although there are some exceptions for fluency reasons. In American English **real** is preferred to really in this case.

*It was very cold last night. It was really cold last night.*

*I am very happy to see you. I am really delighted to see you.*

* Informally we can add emphasis by repeating very.

*I am very, very tired.*

* Formally we can add very + adjective + indeed to add emphasis.

*I am very tired indeed.*

* In British English **not very + positive adjective** can be used instead of an adjective with a negative meaning.

*How was the film? It wasn’t very good.*  (=It was bad)

* We use **not that + adjective** to say it is not as much as you might expect.

*She would never marry someone she’s only just met, she’s not that stupid.*

**Middle Degree Adverbs**

Pretty, rather and quite all indicate middle degree.

* Pretty, rather and quite are used with gradable adjectives.
* Pretty is common in speech, particularly with positive adjectives.

*We were pretty happy with the game.*

* Rather is more commonly used with negative adjectives. Although in British English rather + positive adjective means ‘more than expected’.

*It is rather cold in here.* (negative adjective)

*I expected her to be furious at my suggest but in fact she was rather pleased.* (positive adjective meaning more than I expected)

* Quite is used with both negative and positive adjectives. There is an exception to this rule, we can use quite with ungradable adjectives with the same meaning as completely.

*The game was quite good.*

*I am afraid it is quite impossible.* (The exception, meaning completely impossible)

**Low Degree Adverbs**

A bit, a little and slightly are all used to indicate low degree.

* They are all normally used before adjectives with a negative meaning. However, we often use a bit / a little / slightly + comparative adjectives to express a positive meaning.

*I am just a bit worried that you won’t find your way home.* (negative adjective)

*How are you feeling? A little better, thanks.* (Comparative adjective with a positive meaning)

**Exercise**

- Tick the sentences where adverbs of degree are used correctly.

- Find and correct the mistakes in the other sentences, using: *pretty, rather, quite, a bit, a little, slightly.*

1) I know it's a shabby old jacket, but it's actually slightly comfortable.

2) It's going to be pretty hot there - make sure you pack your shorts.

3) Although they look similar, if you look closely, you'll see they're actually slightly different.

4) Are you feeling pretty calmer now?

5) I'm a bit pleased with the amount of work I managed to get done today.

6) Mr. Coulter is slightly concerned about your poor results recently.

7) It's quite ridiculous to expect teachers to accept the new education guidelines.

8) I'm rather sure that's the turning, coming up on the left.

- Cross out the two adverbs of degree which cannot combine with the adjective in capitals.

1) absolutely really a bit quite extremely **GOOD**

2) very absolutely totally really slightly **FANTASTIC**

3) really not very completely extremely a bit **INTERESTING**

4) absolutely slightly quite a little utterly **PERFECT**

5) rather really absolutely utterly quite **TALL**

6) quite pretty rather 100 percent totally **RIGHT**

Choose adverbs of degree and combine them with adjectives to write example sentences of your own.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)