

12 Comparison of adverbs

Only a few adverbs can have comparative and superlative forms. These include adverbs which take the same form as adjectives (see 11.1).

12.1 The positive

The positive form of adverbs is used in the same type of comparisons as that of adjectives (10.1), e.g.:

Das Stück gefiel mir **nicht** *I didn't like the play as much*
so gut **wie** dir. *as you did.*

12.2 The comparative

Regular adverbs form the comparative in the same way as adjectives, by adding **-er**, and they are used in the same ways (10.2), e.g.:

Sprechen Sie bitte **lauter!** *Speak up, please!*
Er schreibt **weniger** *He writes less neatly than I do.*
ordentlich **als** ich.

Je öfter du übst, **desto/** *The more you practise,*
umso perfekter spielst du. *the better you play.*

12.3 The superlative

The superlative takes the form **am** + adverb + **-st** + the ending **-en**. (Compare adjectives, 10.3.)

Er ist **am schnellsten** *He ran the fastest.*
gelaufen.

12.4 Spelling changes and irregular forms

Like adjectives, some adverbs have spelling changes or irregularities in the comparative and superlative forms, e.g.:

oft	öfter	am öftesten	(see 10.4.1 & 10.4.3)
hoch	höher	am höchsten	(see 10.4.1 & 10.4.2)

As in English, there are a few completely irregular forms:

positive	comparative	superlative
bald (<i>soon</i>)	eher (<i>sooner</i>)	am ehesten (<i>soonest</i>)
gern (<i>gladly</i>)	lieber (<i>more gladly</i>)	am liebsten (<i>most gladly</i>)
gut (<i>well</i>)	besser (<i>better</i>)	am besten (<i>best</i>)
viel (<i>much</i>)	mehr (<i>more</i>)	am meisten (<i>most</i>)

Gern (+ verb) is the usual German equivalent of *to like* or *to be fond of (...ing)*. Its comparative and superlative forms **lieber** and **am liebsten** express preference:

Ich spiele **gern** Tennis, *I like playing tennis, but*
aber noch **lieber** spiele *I prefer playing squash.*
ich Squash.

Am liebsten reite ich. *I like horse riding best of all.*