

➤ Using Double Comparatives

Double comparatives are phrases commonly used in English to express **increasing or decreasing** returns. Double comparatives are often employed to underline the importance of doing or not doing a certain activity. In other words, **it shows cause and effect**. Here are some examples of double comparatives:

- ❖ **The more** you study, **the more** you learn.
- ❖ **The less** money I spend, **the less** I have to worry about saving.

As you can see from these examples, the format of double comparatives is as follows:

The (more / less)	(noun / noun phrase) subject	Verb+ ...	,	the (more / less)	(noun) subject	Verb+ ...
The more	you	study	,	the more	you	learn
The less	you	Worry about the others	,	the less	they	will bother you.
The more	you	spend	,	the less	you	save.

Double comparatives with 'more' and 'less' can be used with adjectives in the same way. In this case, the structure places the comparative adjective first:

The	Comparative adjective	subject	Verb+ ...	,	the	Comparative adjective	subject	Verb+ ...
The	easier	The test	is	,	the	sooner	students	Will answer it.
The	more difficult	the task	is	,	the	sweeter	it	is to succeed

- ❖ **The faster** the car is, **the more dangerous** it is to drive.
- ❖ **The crazier** the idea is, **the more** fun it is to try.

Note 1:

These forms can be mixed up as well. For example, a double comparative might begin with a **more / less** plus a subject and then end in a comparative adjective plus the subject.

- ❖ **The more** money and time he spends with her, **the happier** he becomes.
- ❖ **The less** Mary thinks about the problem, **the more relaxed** she feels.
- ❖ **The more** the students study for the test, **the higher** their scores will be.

Note 2:

You can also reverse the above by beginning with a comparative adjective and ending with **more / less** plus a subject and verb or noun, subject and verb.

- ❖ **The richer** the person is, **the more privilege** he enjoys.
- ❖ **The happier** the child is, **the more** the mom can relax.
- ❖ **The more dangerous** the amusement park ride is, **the less** management worries about making a profit.

Note 3:

Double comparatives are often shortened in spoken English, especially when used as a cliché. Here are some examples of typical clichés using double comparatives.

❖ The more the merrier

Means...

- ❖ The more people there are, the merrier everyone will be.
- ❖ The shorter the line (is), the faster the service (is).

Note 4:

Double comparatives can also be turned into commands in the imperative form when recommending certain actions:

- ❖ Study more, learn more.
- ❖ Play less, study more.
- ❖ Work more, save more.
- ❖ Think harder, get smarter.

Note 5:

Do not use present and past continuous in clauses of double comparative sentences.

The longer couples ~~are waiting~~ to have children, the fewer children they ~~are having~~.

The longer couples wait to have children, the fewer children they have

➤ Double Comparatives (repeated comparative) to Show Change

Finally, double comparatives are also used to show a continual increase or decrease.

- ❖ There are more and more people coming to this vacation spot.
- ❖ It seems like there is less and less time to spend with the family these days.
- ❖ Recently, people are finding more and more time to spend with their families.

Repeated comparative

...	comparative	and	comparative
The food is getting	better	and	better
	worse		worse
	more		more delicious.
	less		less interesting.

EXERCISE 1: Make double comparatives.

1. people / come / party , food / we / need
2. difficult / test , students / study
3. nice / customer service representative , happy / customer

4. high-tech / car , expensive / model
5. full / church , good / pastor
6. funny / comic , sales / cd / have
7. severe / judge , harsh /sentence
8. experienced / technician , satisfying / repair
9. long / play , bored / audience
10. money / spend , money / save

1. The more people come to the party, the more food we will need.
2. The more difficult the test is, the more students should study.
3. The nicer the customer service representative is, the happier the customer will be.
4. The more high-tech the car is, the more expensive the model will cost.
5. The fuller the church is, the better the pastor is.
6. The funnier the comic is, the better sales the CD will have.
7. The more severe the judge, the harsher the sentence will be.
8. The more experienced the technician is, the more satisfying the repair will be.
9. The longer the play lasts, the more bored the audience becomes.
10. The more money you spend, the less money you save.