



# 29 Qualifying descriptions

There are many ways to qualify or add further detail to adjectives. Some types of adjectives can only be modified in certain ways.

-  **New language** Non-gradable adjectives
- Aa Vocabulary** Qualifying words
-  **New skill** Adding detail to descriptions

## 29.1 KEY LANGUAGE NON-GRADABLE ADJECTIVES

Most adjectives can be modified with grading adverbs, such as “slightly,” “very,” and “extremely.” Non-gradable adjectives cannot be modified in this way. These adjectives tend to fall into three categories: extreme, absolute, and classifying.

Gradable adjectives like “good” can be modified with grading adverbs like “extremely” and “very.”

Her arguments were extremely **good**.

Her arguments were **fantastic**!



Non-gradable adjectives like “fantastic” cannot be modified by grading adverbs.

### EXTREME ADJECTIVES

Extreme adjectives are stronger versions of gradable adjectives, such as “awful,” “hilarious,” “fantastic,” or “terrifying.”

Her presentation was **awful**.

The sense of “extremely” is already incorporated here.

### ABSOLUTE ADJECTIVES

Absolute adjectives cannot be graded because they describe fixed qualities or states, such as “unique,” “perfect,” or “impossible.”

She has a **unique** presenting style.

It is not possible for something to be more or less unique.

### CLASSIFYING ADJECTIVES

Classifying adjectives are used to say that something is of a specific type or class, such as “American,” “nuclear,” or “medical.”

The audience was **American**.





## 29.2 WRITE THE ADJECTIVES FROM THE PANEL IN THE CORRECT CATEGORIES

EXTREME	ABSOLUTE	CLASSIFYING
<u>awful</u>	<u>unique</u>	<u>organic</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

unknown   ~~awful~~   digital   dead   enormous   right   ~~organic~~   wrong  
chemical   industrial   superb   tiny   ~~unique~~   disgusting   electronic



## 29.3 MARK THE SENTENCES THAT ARE CORRECT

This new product is great. It's extremely perfect for kids. ☐  
This new product is great. It's perfect for kids. ☒

1 Have you seen this very amazing designer watch? ☐  
Have you seen this amazing designer watch? ☐

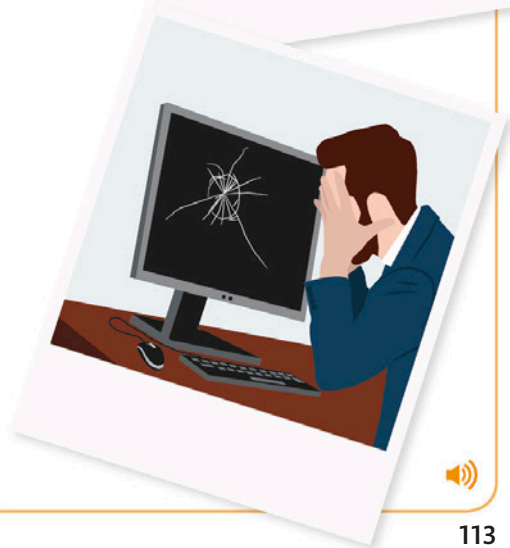
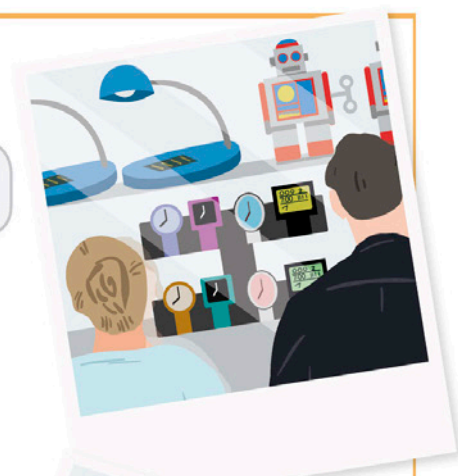
2 This new software is so slow. It's slightly awful. ☐  
This new software is so slow. It's awful. ☐

3 Because it runs on solar power, it's extremely cheap. ☐  
Because it runs on solar power, it's extremely cheaply. ☐

4 The instructions for this product are very impossible. ☐  
The instructions for this product are impossible. ☐

5 The numbers on the watch are tiny! ☐  
The numbers on the watch are slightly tiny! ☐

6 I need to replace my computer. It's extremely broken. ☐  
I need to replace my computer. It's broken. ☐



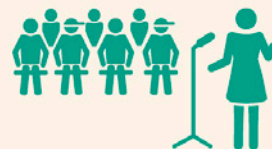
## 29.4 KEY LANGUAGE NON-GRADING ADVERBS

Some adverbs can be used to qualify non-gradable adjectives. These are called "non-grading adverbs," and often mean "entirely" or "almost entirely." They cannot usually be used with gradable adjectives.

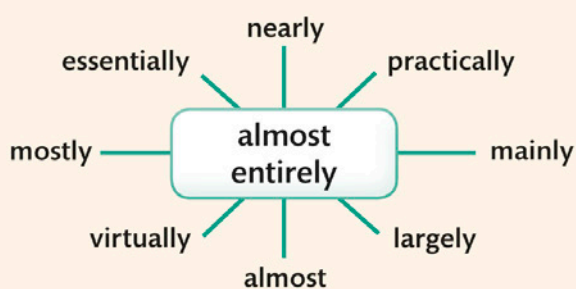
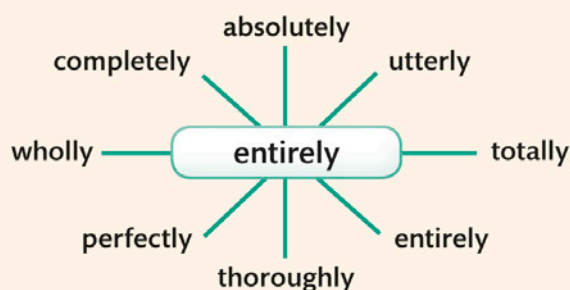
Her presentation was **absolutely awful**!

She has a **totally unique** presenting style.

She had a **completely American** audience.



## 29.5 FURTHER EXAMPLES NON-GRADING ADVERBS



## 29.6 CROSS OUT THE INCORRECT WORD IN EACH SENTENCE

If this new design is really popular, it will be an absolutely **huge** / ~~big~~ bonus for the company.

- ① It is **incredibly** / **perfectly** important to know a lot about the product you are trying to sell.
- ② Did you see that **slightly** / **completely** digital presentation by the marketing team?
- ③ Don't you think that this kind of product is extremely **useful** / **excellent** for teenagers?
- ④ To copy and then sell someone else's invention as your own is **slightly** / **utterly** wrong.
- ⑤ From the initial product design to marketing is a **rather** / **completely** long process.
- ⑥ The new designer in my department is **absolutely** / **really** fantastic.
- ⑦ I think the food at the conference was bad. I felt extremely **sick** / **boiling** this morning.
- ⑧ I have to say that I think it was an absolutely **superb** / **okay** presentation.



## 29.7 KEY LANGUAGE “REALLY,” “FAIRLY,” AND “PRETTY”

A few adverbs can be used with both gradable and non-gradable adjectives. They are “really” (meaning “very much”), and “pretty” and “fairly” (both meaning “quite a lot but not very”).

### TIP

Note that “fairly” can have a negative connotation and so is not normally used to suggest something is very good or necessary.

What you need is a **really** { **good**  
**brilliant** } idea.

Gradable  
Non-gradable



You need to be **fairly** { **confident**  
**certain** } it works.

Inventing a new product is **pretty** { **difficult**  
**impossible** }.



## 29.8 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS



Two business partners, James and Maria, have just watched several presentations from product developers. They are discussing which products to invest in.

What did James think of the presentations?

- Liked them a lot ☒
- Hated them ☐
- Liked them a little ☐

1 What did Maria think about how the smartwatch looked?

- Liked it a lot ☐
- Hated it ☐
- Liked it a little ☐

2 What did they both think about the smartwatch functionality?

- Really good ☐
- Really bad ☐
- Not very good ☐

3 What did they think about the cardboard coffee capsules idea?

- Liked it a lot ☐
- Hated it ☐
- Liked it a little ☐

4 What did Maria think about how the coffee machine looked?

- Liked it a lot ☐
- Hated it ☐
- Didn't like it very much ☐

5 What did James think of the air freshener?

- Liked it a lot ☐
- Hated it ☐
- Didn't like it very much ☐



## 29.9 KEY LANGUAGE "QUITE"

You can use "quite" with both gradable and non-gradable adjectives. In US English, it usually means "very." In UK English, it weakens gradable adjectives to mean "not very," but strengthens non-gradable adjectives to mean "very" or "completely."

Her invention is **quite incredible**.

[Her invention is absolutely fantastic.]

Her idea was **quite good**.

[Her idea was really good.] (US)

[Her idea was good, but not great.] (UK)



## 29.10 READ THE PRODUCT REVIEWS AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

**GAVAC**

**PRODUCT DESCRIPTION:**

The 2-in-1 Gavac is a cordless, lightweight vacuum cleaner. It can be used as an upright vacuum cleaner, or the bottom can easily be detached and used as a handheld cleaner for those difficult-to-reach places. It charges overnight and the battery lasts for up to 15 minutes.

**REVIEWS:**

**Don, Liverpool:** This machine is quite useless. It takes all night to charge the battery. It works well for five minutes and then has less and less power until it finally stops after 10 minutes. It takes me three days to vacuum my house!

**Marta, London:** This cleaner is quite frustrating. I bought it because the description says that it easily changes to a handheld cleaner. It takes about a minute to get the sections apart and then 5 more to put them back together again!

**Owen, Cardiff:** It's quite lightweight, but only because it is made from awful, cheap materials that break quickly. Do not buy.

The vacuum cleaner does not weigh very much.

True ☒ False ☐

- 1 It takes 15 minutes to charge the vacuum cleaner.

True ☐ False ☐

- 2 Don says the vacuum works well for ten minutes.

True ☐ False ☐

- 3 Marta says it is difficult to put the parts back together.

True ☐ False ☐

- 4 Owen agrees that the Gavac cleaner is lightweight.

True ☐ False ☐

- 5 Overall, the reviews are quite positive about the Gavac.

True ☐ False ☐



HOME SHOPPING TODAY



### Envirocaff

The Envirocaff is a coffee machine like no other. Not only does it look absolutely amazing, but it also makes fantastic-tasting coffee every time. Unlike any other machine, the coffee capsules are made entirely from cardboard and can be recycled. Great coffee that doesn't cost the earth. \$85 for the machine \$5.99 / 12 coffee capsules

## New gadgets for your home

Inventions and innovations to make your home life easier and more comfortable. Order now for next-day delivery!

### Blingtech3000

This sleek, fashionable watch face can be combined with a number of different designer straps from traditional leather through to modern rubber. The software is cutting edge and ensures all the functionality you would hope for from a smartwatch: email alerts, a fitness suite, and, of course, a watch. \$259

### AirFresh 4ever

This everlasting air freshener will bring all the smells of the countryside into your home forever! Unlike our rivals' products, there are no costly

refills. There is just a great fragrance to make your house smell fresh forever. Enjoy AirFresh in three incredible fragrances: Country, Sea, and Highland fragrances. \$24.99

### Coz-E-Slip

The amazing new self-warming slippers. You can choose when to heat them up by using the timer or you can use the completely self-regulating thermostat option and have cozy, toasty, ready-to-go slippers at any time of day. Stay warm this winter with Coz-E-Slip. \$45.99 / batteries not included

The Envirocaff makes coffee that is remarkably tasty.

- 1 The coffee capsules are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 The Blingtech3000 is an \_\_\_\_\_ timepiece.
- 3 The Blingtech3000's software is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 Most air freshener refills are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 Coz-E-Slip slippers have a \_\_\_\_\_ thermostat.
- 6 The slippers are supposed to be \_\_\_\_\_.

wholly recyclable

utterly stylish

~~remarkably tasty~~

extremely expensive

totally automatic

incredibly comfortable

absolutely state-of-the-art



### 29 CHECKLIST



Non-gradable adjectives ☐

Aa Qualifying words ☐



Adding detail to descriptions ☐