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What IS AN ADJECTIVE?

An adjective is a word or phrase that describes a **noun** or **pronoun** with another word or phrase that gives more information about how something looks, smells, sounds, tastes, or feels. Some pronouns function as adjectives as well.

Adjectives answer these questions:

* What kind? **blue** car, **calico** cat
* Which one? **this** school, **those** people
* How many? **five** children, **both** teachers
* Whose? **my** book, **her** backpack

Types of adjectives

1. Descriptive adjectives are the most common adjective. They give information about a noun or pronoun by answering the question *what kind*:how something looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels.

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| **Examples:** | small, orange, young, hungry, angry |
|  | **orange** shirt, **hungry** squirrel |

1. **Pronouns used as adjectives**:
   * 1. Possessive pronouns: **my, your, his, her, its, our, their, one's**

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| **Examples:** | I change **my** hairstyle at least once a year. |
|  | After dinner with friends, Michelle went to **their** house. |

* + 1. Pronouns that identify *which one*: **this, that, these, those**

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| **Examples:** | I would like to buy **this** sandwich. |
|  | **Those** sunflowers are taller than I am. |

* + 1. Interrogative pronouns, that ask questions to clarify *which one*: **what, which, whose.**

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| **Examples:** | **What** assignment is that? |
|  | **Which** book is yours? |
|  | **Whose** pencil do you have? |

* + 1. Indefinite pronouns that do not identify a specific number, person, place, or time: **another, each, both, many, any, some, no, either, neither.**

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| **Examples:** | I will watch the movie **another** time. |
|  | You can use **either** idea for your paper. |
|  | This lunch is for **any** person who wants it. |
|  |  |

1. Numbers. When a number is used to describe a noun or pronoun, it is an adjective: **two, three, four**, etc; **fifth, sixth, seventh,** etc.

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| **Examples:** | He needed **two** bricks to finish the landscaping project. |
|  | Today is my brother’s **eighteenth**birthday. |

1. **Articles**. There are only three articles, and they are used before nouns to clarify whether the noun should be considered a general reference or a specific reference.
2. Indefinite articles: **a, an**

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| **Examples:** | **A**cat slept on my porch. |
|  | **An** open window provided a cool breeze. |
|  |  |

1. Definite article: **the**

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| **Examples:** | **The**black and white cat slept on my porch. |
|  | **The** open window in my bedroom provided a breeze. |

The function AND position of adjectives

Adjectives are usually near the nouns or pronouns they modify:

* Before the noun being modified or before the indefinite pronoun **one**.

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| **Examples:** | The **industrious** student visited the Writing Center often. |
|  | That student is the **only** one to miss five days in a row. |

* After a linking verb to modify the subject of the sentence.

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| **Examples:** | The teacher seems **knowledgeable.** |
|  | The room smells **musty**. |

* After the direct object in the sentence.

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| **Examples:** | I want that essay **perfect.** |
|  | The assignment is driving me **crazy**. |

* After an indefinite pronoun.

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| **Examples:** | Something **small** and **shiny** would be nice. |
|  | None **sweeter** could be tasted. |

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# Sensory Adjective Examples

## Taste

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| acidic | creamy | nutty | savory | sweet |
| appetizing | delicate | peppery | sharp | stale |
| bitter | delicious | pickled | smoked | tangy |
| bland | gooey | ripe | sour | tart |
| briny | hot | rotting | spicy | tasteless |
| cool | juicy | salty | stale | tasty |
|  |  |  |  |  |

## Touch

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| arid  baking  blistering  breezy  bumpy  chilly  clingy  coarse  cold  cool  crunchy  damp | dirty  drenched  dry  dust  elastic  filthy  firm  fluffy  freezing  frigid  gooey  grainy | greasy  grimy  gritty  hairy  hard  heavy  hot  humid  jagged  jiggling  light  loose | lukewarm  lumpy  melted  moist  prickly  rough  scorching  shaggy  sharp  silky  sizzling  slimy | smooth  soaked  soft  solid  sticky  stinging  sweaty  tepid  tight  vibrating  warm  wet |

## Smell

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| aromatic  balmy  bitter  burning  choking  clean  delicious  fetid | floral  fragrant  fresh  fruity  juicy  mild  musky  musty | nutty  perfumed  pungent  putrid  redolent  rich  rotten  salty | smoky  spicy  stale  stinky  strong  sweet |

## Sight

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| beefy  billowy  blazing  brilliant  broad  burly  chubby  cloudy  corpulent  crooked  crowded  drab  dreary  dull  flashy | flickering  forked  fragile  gangly  gaudy  gaunt  gigantic  glittering  gloomy  glowing  graceful  grotesque  healthy  hefty  lanky | lofty  lustrous  misty  muscular  ominous  pallid  petite  polished  portly  puny  radiant  rotting  rotund  scrawny  shattered | slender  spacious  sparkling  statuesque  steep  stout  sunny  swollen  tapering  towering  trim  unsightly  voluminous  wizened  youthful |

## Sound

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| banging  barking  blaring  booming  buzzing  clamoring  clashing  cooing  crashing  crunching  deafening  dissonant | earsplitting  faint  purring  quivering  resonant  growling  gurgling  harmonious  hoarse  howling  humming  lulling | melodic  moaning  monotone  muffled  mumbled murmured muttered  popping  ringing  roaring  shrieking  shrill | snapping  snarling  thundering  thunderous  wailing  wheezing  whimpering  whispered  whistling |

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# Practice Exercises

Fill in the blank with an appropriate descriptive adjective.

1. Conner wore a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ shirt.
2. The medicine tasted \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Her shoes look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cat pounced on the toy.
5. There’s something in the oven that smells \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Fill in the blank with **what, which**, or **whose**.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ type of cake do you want?
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ coat is this?
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lunch is yours?
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ car is parked in the driveway?
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ movie should I watch tonight?

Fill in the blank with an appropriate possessive pronoun that acts as an adjective.

1. The sparrow fluttered \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ wings as it hopped toward a puddle of water.
2. Sarah wore \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ new purse on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ shoulder.
3. The choir knew \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ director would guide them through \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ performance smoothly.
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ house is the two-story green one.
5. This apple isn’t mine, so it must be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ apple.

Fill in the blank with an appropriate indefinite pronoun that acts as an adjective.

1. Professor Lee told students they could borrow \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of his pens or pencils.
2. I have seen \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Oscar winning films, but I haven’t seen that one.
3. You can choose \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ topic, immigration or prison reform, for your research paper.
4. I will ask \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ person since you aren’t certain of the answer.
5. I like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ color in a rainbow.