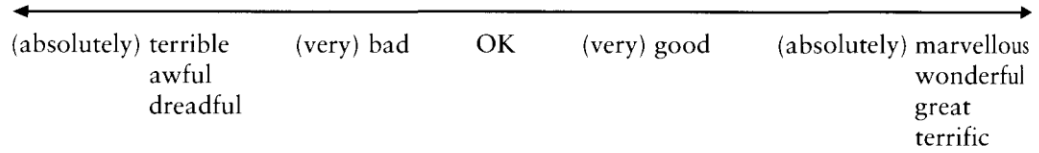


30 Adjectives

A 'Scale' and 'limit' adjectives



We can use *very* before 'scale' adjectives e.g. *very good*, *very bad*; we can use *absolutely* before 'limit' adjectives e.g. *absolutely awful*, *absolutely great*. (You cannot say '*very wonderful*'; you cannot say '*absolutely good*'.) Here are some more examples.

<i>Scale</i>	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>Limit</i>
big	huge/enormous	hot	boiling
small	tiny	cold	freezing
tired	exhausted	crowded (= full of people)	packed
interesting	fascinating	frightened (= afraid of sth.)	terrified
surprised	astonished	hungry	starving (<i>infml</i>)

B Adjectives ending -ing and -ed

There is a large group of adjectives which can have an **-ing** or **-ed** ending. The **-ing** ending is used on adjectives which describe a person or thing or situation; the **-ed** ending is on adjectives which describe the effect this person, thing or situation has on us.

It was such a **boring** party; I was **bored**, and so was everyone else.
 I didn't think the film was very **frightening**, but my younger brother was **frightened** by it.
 I think the students are **depressed** largely because the weather is so **depressing**.

Other examples of common adjectives ending **-ing** and **-ed** include:

surprising/surprised	exciting/excited
exhausting/exhausted	terrifying/terrified
confusing/confused	tiring/tired
frightening/frightened	fascinating/fascinated
astonishing/astonished	embarrassing/embarrassed
interesting/interested	disappointing/disappointed

Look at these examples to help you with the meaning of some of these words.

John wasn't very good at maths, so I was very **surprised** when he passed the exam. And I was **astonished** when I discovered that he'd got 98%.

In London there are lots of streets with the same name and it's very **confusing** if you are a tourist. Another problem is that it's a huge place. We walked everywhere on our last trip and we were **exhausted** at the end of each day. But it's an **exciting** city, with so much to do.

It's been a terrible week for Greg. He was very **disappointed** last Saturday because he played badly in an important match. Then on Monday, his girlfriend left him for someone else, so he's very **depressed** at the moment.

One of our teachers can never remember our names. It seemed funny at first, but now it's getting a bit **embarrassing**.

Exercises

30.1 Write at least one limit adjective for these scale adjectives. Cover the opposite page before you begin.

big	.....	hot	.....
small	.....	cold	.....
tired	.....	bad	.....
surprised	.....	hungry	.....
interesting	.....	frightened	.....

30.2 Rewrite this postcard using limit adjectives where possible to give a more positive and/or more extreme effect.

Arrived on Sunday. The hotel is good - we've got a big room and the food is nice. It's been hot every day so far, so we've spent most of the time on the beach, along with everyone else - it's very crowded. But the sea is actually cold - that's because it's the Atlantic coast, I suppose.
 Tomorrow we're going to walk to a small seaside village about ten kilometres from here - I imagine I'll be really tired by the time we get back, but it does sound an interesting place and I'm looking forward to it.
 I'll write again in a couple of days and tell you about it.
 Until then, love, Benita

30.3 Complete these dialogues using the correct limit adjective in the correct form (-ing or -ed).

- A: Was it very tiring?
B: Yes we were absolutely
- A: I was very interested in her talk.
B: Yes it was absolutely
- A: Maria said it was a frightening film.
B: Yes it was absolutely
- A: It was a surprising decision, wasn't it?
B: Yes I was absolutely
- A: Was it very cold?
B: Oh yes, it was

30.4 Can you think of an adjective from the opposite page to describe how the people felt in each of these situations?

- They walked about ten miles in the morning, then spent the afternoon helping some friends to cut down some trees.
- From the description in the travel brochure, they expected a beautiful big villa by the sea. In actual fact it was quite small, not very nice, and miles from the beach.
- They decided to wear jeans to the party but when they arrived everyone else was wearing formal evening dress.
- One person told them the street was on the left, another told them to turn right, and a third person said they had to go back to the station.
- When they got home there was a new car outside their house. They went inside and there was a new sofa in the lounge and a new dining table in the dining room.