

What are adjectives?

An adjective is a word like kind, happy, smart and intelligent. An adjective typically modifies a noun and denotes a temporary or permanent quality associated with that noun. For example, a *smart boy* is a boy who is distinguished from other boys by being smart.

Not all adjectives are used to denote a quality associated with a noun. For example, the adjective *mere* in 'a mere child' does not denote a quality of the child.

Kinds of adjectives

Adjectives may be divided into the following classes:

Adjectives of quality

Adjectives of quality refer to the kind or quality of a person or thing. They answer the question: 'of what kind?'

Tokyo is a large city. (Here the adjective large shows a certain quality associated with the city Tokyo.)

Alice is a brilliant student. (Here the adjective brilliant shows a quality associated with the noun Alice.)

Note that adjectives formed from proper nouns are generally considered as adjectives of quality. Examples are: Persian carpets, French wines etc.

Adjectives of quantity

Adjectives of quantity answer the question 'how much?'. Examples are: *some, any, much, little, enough, all, no, half, whole etc.*

We need some rice.

You have little patience.

He has lost all his wealth.

He did not eat any rice.

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Adjectives of number

Adjectives of number answer the question 'how many'. Examples are: *many, one, two, first, tenth, all etc.*

Each hand has five fingers.

Sunday is the first day of the week.

All men must die.

There are several mistakes in your essay.

Demonstrative adjectives

Demonstrative adjectives answer the question 'which?'. Examples are: *this, that, these, those and such.*

That boy is industrious.

This bag is made of expensive leather.

Those mangoes were very sweet.

I hate such people.

Note that *this* and *that* are used with singular nouns. *These* and *those* are used with plural nouns.

Interrogative adjectives

When they are used with nouns to ask questions, the questions words *what, which* and *whose* are called interrogative adjectives.

Whose bag is this?

Which way shall we go?