

The background features a light pink gradient with decorative elements of black branches bearing pink cherry blossoms in the corners. Several pink petals are scattered across the background.

COMPARATIVES WITH QUANTIFIERS AND INTENSIFIERS

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INTRODUCTION

When we use comparatives in English, we often want to indicate how much one thing differs from another. Intensifiers or quantifiers help us do this. They show the degree of difference and can be subtle or strong, formal or informal. At a B2 level, using them correctly gives your speech and writing more nuance.



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STRONG INTENSIFIERS - FAR, WAY, SIGNIFICANTLY, CONSIDERABLY, MUCH, A LOT

These words show a large or obvious difference between the two things being compared.

Far

- Indicates a strong, clear difference.
- Often used in formal or neutral contexts.
- Usually placed before the comparative.

Examples:

- This exam is far more difficult than the last one.
- He is far better at tennis than his brother.

Way

- Very informal, often used in spoken English.
- Expresses an exaggerated difference.
- Placed before the comparative.

Examples:

- She is way taller than her classmates.
- This hotel is way more expensive than I expected.

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STRONG INTENSIFIERS - FAR, WAY, SIGNIFICANTLY, CONSIDERABLY, MUCH, A LOT



Significantly and Considerably

- Formal adverbs used to indicate a noticeable or important difference.
- Usually in written English, research, or professional reports.
- Placed before the comparative.

Examples:

- Prices are significantly higher than last year.
- The new model is considerably more efficient than the previous one.

Much / A lot

- Common in both spoken and written English.
- Indicate a strong difference but less formal than “significantly”.
- Placed before the comparative.

Examples:

- I am much happier than I was last year.
- She reads a lot more books than her friend.

Usage note: These intensifiers can modify comparatives of adjectives, adverbs, or quantifiers.

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WEAK OR SUBTLE INTENSIFIERS - SLIGHTLY, A BIT, A TAD, marginally, shade

These words indicate small differences, often used for polite or nuanced comparisons.

Slightly

- Neutral, often in British English.
- Indicates a small difference.
- Placed before the comparative.

Examples:

- This task is slightly easier than the previous one.
- She arrived slightly later than her colleagues.

A bit / A tad

- Informal, spoken English.
- Can make the comparison sound friendly or casual.
- Placed before the comparative.

Examples:

- I'm a bit taller than my brother.
- This cake is a tad sweeter than I expected.

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WEAK OR SUBTLE INTENSIFIERS - SLIGHTLY, A BIT, A TAD, marginally, SHADE

Marginally

- Formal, indicates a very small difference, often in statistics or professional writing.
- Placed before the comparative.

Examples:

- The temperature today is marginally higher than yesterday.
- Our sales are marginally lower than last quarter.

Shade

- Informal, British English.
- Means “a little” or “slightly”.
- Placed before the comparative.

Examples:

- I'm a shade taller than him.
- This colour is a shade lighter than the sample.



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USING “NOT AS ... AS” FOR COMPARISONS

Sometimes, instead of emphasising how much bigger/smaller/stronger something is, we want to indicate a smaller difference or equality. This is where “not as ... as” is used.

Structure:

- not as + adjective/adverb + as + noun/pronoun

Examples:

- This book is not as interesting as the last one.
- He is not as fast as his brother.
- The weather today is not as cold as yesterday.

Tip: You can combine weak intensifiers with “not as ... as” to soften the comparison:

- This exam was not as difficult as I expected.
- She is not quite as tall as her sister.



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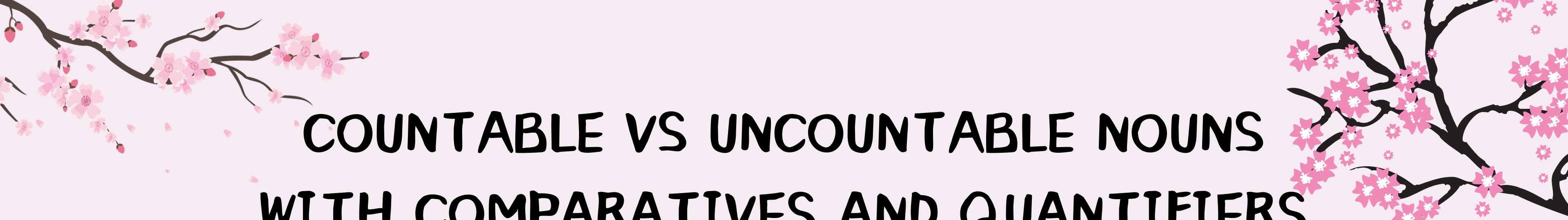


POSITION OF QUANTIFIERS AND INTENSIFIERS

1. Before the comparative is the most common position:
 - He is far taller than his brother.
 - Prices are slightly higher than last year.
2. With “more” or “less” as part of the comparative, intensifiers usually go before “more”/ “less”:
 - She has much more experience than I do.
 - There is slightly less sugar in this recipe than the previous one.
3. With “not as ... as”, weak intensifiers often go before the adjective or after “not quite”:
 - This room is not quite as large as the other one.
 - The situation is not as serious as we thought.



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COUNTABLE VS UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS WITH COMPARATIVES AND QUANTIFIERS

Some intensifiers are used with quantifiers (like more/fewer/less) to indicate degree:

Countable nouns → use fewer + intensifier:

There are far fewer mistakes than in the previous report.

She has slightly fewer books than her friend.

Uncountable nouns → use less + intensifier:

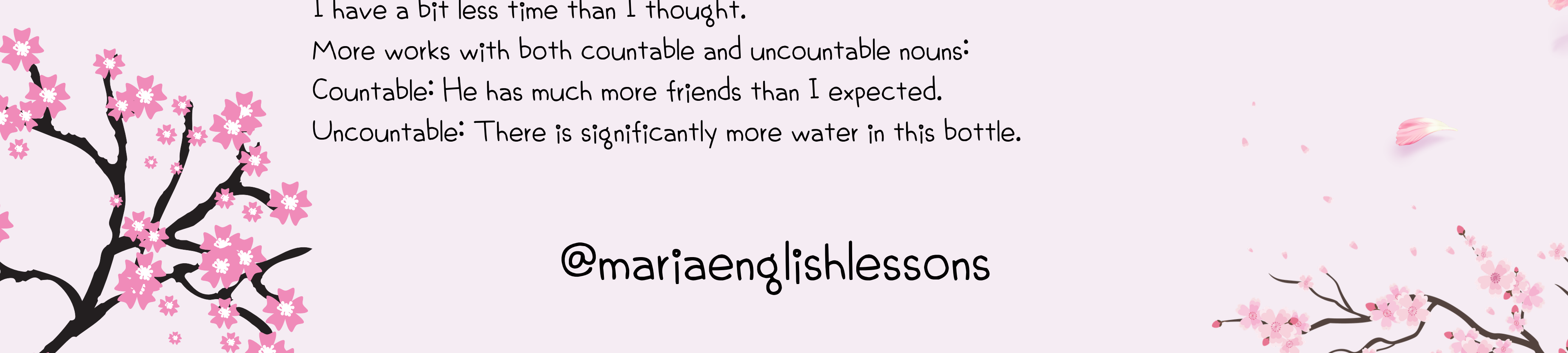
There is considerably less sugar in this cake.

I have a bit less time than I thought.

More works with both countable and uncountable nouns:

Countable: He has much more friends than I expected.

Uncountable: There is significantly more water in this bottle.



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SUMMARY OF USAGE BY DEGREE

- Strong difference → far, way, significantly, considerably, much, a lot
- Small difference → slightly, a bit, a tad, marginally, a shade
- Neutral/safe comparison → not as ... as
- Countable nouns → fewer (with intensifiers)
- Uncountable nouns → less (with intensifiers)
- Before the comparative is the usual position



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FULL EXAMPLE SENTENCES



- This hotel is far more expensive than the one we stayed at last year.
 - She speaks way more clearly than her colleague.
 - Prices are significantly higher than they were last month.
 - The weather is slightly colder than yesterday.
 - There are a bit fewer students in this class than last term.
 - I feel a tad happier than I did last week.
 - Our sales are marginally lower than projected.
 - His essay is a shade better than mine.
 - This car is not as comfortable as the previous model.
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