

Order of adjectives

How to order adjectives in English

In many languages, [adjectives](#) denoting attributes usually occur in a specific order. Generally, the adjective order in English is:

1. *Quantity or number*
2. *Quality or opinion*
3. *Size*
4. *Age*
5. *Shape*
6. *Colour*
7. *Proper adjective (often nationality, other place of origin)*
8. *Material*
9. *Purpose or qualifier*

For example:

1. I love that **really big old green antique** car that always parked at the end of the street.
2. My sister adopted a **beautiful big white** bulldog.

When there are two or more adjectives that are from the same group, the word *and* is placed between the two adjectives:

1. The house is green and red.
2. The library has old **and** new books.

When there are three or more adjectives from the same adjective group, place a comma between each of the coordinate adjectives:

1. We live in the big **green, white** and **red** house at the end of the street.
2. My friend lost a **red, black** and white watch.

A comma is not placed between an adjective and the noun.

Order of adjectives – examples

More examples:

1. I love that **beautiful old big green antique** car that always parked at the end of the street. [quality – age – size – colour – proper adjective]
2. My sister has a **big beautiful tan** and **white** bulldog. [size – quality – colour – colour]
3. A **wonderful old Italian** clock. [opinion – age – origin]
4. A **big square blue** box. [dimension – shape – colour]
5. A **disgusting pink plastic** ornament. [opinion – colour – material]
6. Some **slim new French** trousers. [dimension – age – origin]
7. An **amazing new American** movie. [opinion – age – origin]
8. I bought a pair of **black leather** shoes. [colour – material]

Order of adjectives exercises

1. Choose the best answer for each sentence.

A. The house is _____.

- ☐ large and white
- ☐ white and large
- ☐ large white

B. They live in a _____ house.

- large and white
- white and large
- large white

Answers: A – large and white B – large white

2. Which sentence uses the correct order of adjectives?

- A. We took a ride on a blue, old Chinese bus.
- B. We took a ride on a Chinese, old, blue bus.
- C. We took a ride on an old, blue Chinese bus.

Answer: C

3. Which sentence uses the correct order of adjectives?

- A. I'd like three good reasons why you don't like spinach.
- B. I'd like a good three reasons why you don't like spinach.
- C. I'd like good reasons three why you don't like spinach.

Answer: A

4. Which sentence uses the correct order of adjectives?

- A. I like that really big red old antique tractor in the museum.
- B. I like that really big old red antique tractor in the museum.
- C. I like that old, red, really big antique tractor in the museum.

Answer: B

5. Which sentence uses the correct order of adjectives?

- A. My brother rode a beautiful big black Friesian horse in the parade.
- B. My brother rode a beautiful Friesian big black horse in the parade.

C. My brother rode a big, black, beautiful Friesian horse in the parade.

Answer: A

6. For each of the following sentences, choose the correct order of adjectives to fill in the blank.

A. My grandmother lives in the _____ house on the corner

- ☐ little blue, green and white
- ☐ little blue and green and white
- ☐ little, blue, green, and white

B. The store carries an assortment of _____ objects.

- ☐ interesting new, old and antique
- ☐ new, old, interesting and antique
- ☐ interesting, old and new and antique

C. We went for a two-week cruise on a _____ ocean liner.

- ☐ incredible brand-new, huge Italian
- ☐ incredible, huge, brand-new Italian
- ☐ Italian incredible, brand-new, huge

Answers: A – little blue, green and white B – interesting new, old and antique C – incredible, huge, brand-new Italian

7. For each of the following sentences, choose the correct order of adjectives to fill in the blank.

A. I bought a pair of _____ boots.

- ☐ new, nice, red rain
- ☐ nice new red rain
- ☐ red nice new rain

B. My dad was thrilled with his gift of _____ bowties for his clown act.

- three squirting new nice big polka-dotted
- three polka-dotted nice new squirting
- three nice big new polka-dotted squirting

C. Please put the marbles into that _____ box.

- round little old red
- little old round red
- little old red round

Answers: A – nice new red rain B – three nice big new polka-dotted squirting C – little old round red

8. For each of the following sentences, choose the correct order of adjectives to fill in the blank:

A. I was surprised to receive a _____ puppy for my birthday.

- little, cute, eight-week-old golden retriever
- cute eight-week-old little golden retriever
- cute little eight-week-old golden retriever

B. Our work uniform consists of black pants, black shoes, and a _____ shirt.

- yellow baggy big polo
- big baggy yellow polo
- baggy yellow big polo

C. I've been spending a lot of time in antique shops looking for the perfect _____ clock.

- little silver Italian cuckoo
- little Italian silver cuckoo

- silver little Italian cuckoo

Answers: A – cute little eight-week-old golden retriever B – big baggy yellow polo C – little silver Italian cuckoo

9. Which sentence uses the correct order of adjectives?

- A. Our grandparents drive a motorhome with black and white stripes.
- B. Our grandparents drive a motorhome with black with white stripes.
- C. Our grandparents drive a motorhome with black, white stripes.

Answer: A

10. Which sentence uses the correct order of adjectives?

- A. During my college years, I wore a red, white and black big hat to sporting events.
- B. During my college years, I wore a big red, white and black hat to sporting events.
- C. During my college years, I wore a big red white and black, hat to sporting events.

Answer: B