

Adjectives: forms & usage

> Forms:

Adjectives are generally invariable in English and do not agree with nouns in number and gender.

a **blue** car
the **great** outdoors
a group of **young** women

However, a few adjectives have a connotation which is slightly masculine or feminine. Thus, one says that a woman is **beautiful** while a man would be called **handsome**.

Adjectives indicating religion or nationality (or a region, state or province) generally begin with a capital letter, whether they refer to people or objects:

She is an **American** student.
They go to a **Catholic** school.
They enjoy **Breton** music.

> Usage:

The adjective will be placed, with very few exceptions, in front of the noun it modifies. When two adjectives precede a noun, they can be connected by a comma (,) or by the conjunction "and." In a series of three or more adjectives, one usually uses "and" before the last adjective in the list.

Examples: I like **short** novels.
That fellow will be a **competent** worker.
She writes **long and flowery** letters.
He works **long, hard** hours.
She had a **mean, old and overbearing** step-mother.

An adjective may follow the noun when it is in a predicate (after the verb) or in a relative clause. (In relative clauses the relative pronoun may be implicit.)

Examples: He was a man (who was) always **happy** to help others.
She is a woman (who is) **true** to herself.
They were entirely **satisfied**.

TEST

Complete this sentence with an article, a noun and an adjective: Peter has ...

- adjectives: elegant / short / brown / long / little / blue / warm / curly
- articles: a / an / (nothing)
- nouns: coat / gloves / beard / eyes

ANSWERS > examples (there are more correct answers): an elegant / warm coat – brown / short gloves – curly / little beard – blue eyes – an elegant, warm, blue coat