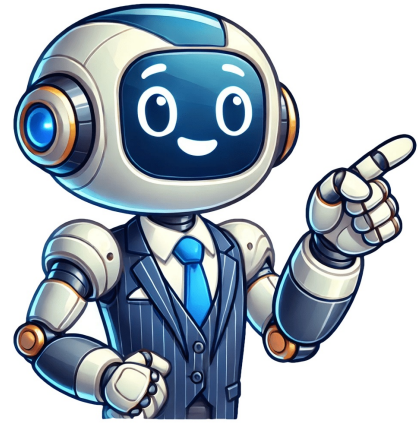


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The use of adjectives can be quite complex when it comes to forming comparatives and superlatives. Some adjectives, such as those with Latin roots, have irregular forms that don't follow the usual rules. For example, intelligent and beautiful have comparatives like more intelligent and more beautiful, whereas others, like clean and pretty, follow the standard pattern of adding -er to form the comparative. In general, adjectives with more than two syllables tend to take on the form "more [adjective]" for comparison, while those with fewer syllables often use the phrase "the most [adjective]" to express superlativity. However, there are exceptions, and some words may require consulting a reliable dictionary for accurate information. Additionally, some adjectives have different forms for their comparatives and superlatives, such as good/better/the best or bad/worse/the worst. The key is to understand the specific rules governing each word's usage. It's probably one of those AE/BE things, Loob - we certainly used to "erase the blackboards" when I was a kid, and I don't see why a whiteboard would be any different. It seems like the difference between erasing something that is already written on it and wiping off a clean slate has caused confusion for many people. Yes, maybe it is one of those AE/BE things, RM1(SS) - I really couldn't say "erasing the blackboard"/"erasing the whiteboard" because I'm not sure how to pronounce them properly. What about this sentence: I was wiping off the board. Would it raise an eyebrow? Well, it would sound slightly strange to me, wolf - but only slightly.... So... If you don't erase the board, do you call these things erasers? Umm - I'm not sure I've understood your point, Myridon. But anyway: (1) No, I wouldn't erase a blackboard or whiteboard (2) No, I wouldn't call those things erasers. (Maybe we're heading off-topic?) Wiping off the board sounds distinctly odd to me. I've forgotten what was used to wipe the blackboard with, but I think I called it the blackboard duster (which is a bit dubious), PS Excuse my misspelling of erasing!! I tried the BNC and I didn't get any result for "erased the board" or "erasing the board". Instead I found a sentence with the word wipe: "Wiping the board clean, she began to write on it in bold letters something that would be comprehensible only to herself and Miss Harker: PLEASE HELP ME" Source: A twist of fate by Pamela Scobie. When I tried the COCA I got this: "The teacher returned to his desk, straightened some papers, then erased the board with a wet rag." Source: A Circus at the Center of the World by Daniel Alarcón. It might be the blackboard. "I stayed in the classroom as long as I could, erasing the board, buffing the erasers. Finally Miss Amherst said it was time to go." Source: In the family by Paulette Rabia Rayford Wiping off the board sounds distinctly odd to me. I've forgotten what was used to wipe the blackboard with, but I think I called it the blackboard duster (which is a bit dubious). I agree that there's definitely an AE/BE difference here. Both "Wipe off the board." and "Erase the board." (I call what Myridon linked to an eraser.) sound perfectly normal to me, especially "Wipe off the board." as I use this phrasing with many surfaces. "Wipe off the table.", "Wipe off the mirror.", "Wipe off the monitor.", etc. So... If you don't erase the board, do you call these things erasers? This is the classic AE/BE thing that causes so much amusement to Americans. What you call an eraser, Myridon, we usually call a rubber (whether used on paper, blackboards or whiteboards). When I was at school, we had board rubbers. But even if I called it an eraser, I agree with Loob and e2four. Given that to erase is to obliterate or destroy, I wouldn't erase the whiteboard (you'd get through a lot of whiteboards that way!); I'd erase the writing. Obviously from Kate's, RM1's and your comments, "erase the white/blackboard" is a common AE expression, but would you say it the same way when talking about something written on paper? — "He erased the paper"? ... or "He erased the writing"? "He erased the paper." sounds fine to me. For me to think it means anything other than he erased the writing on the paper, you'd have to say something like "He erased the paper from existence." (which sounds quite over dramatic) or change the verb completely. "He destroyed the paper." Now I remember the phrase "Would you rub the board?" which parallels the AE "erase the board". This is the classic AE/BE thing that causes so much amusement to Americans. What you call an eraser, Myridon, we usually call a rubber (whether used on paper, blackboards or whiteboards). When I was at school, we had board rubbers. But even if I called it an eraser, I agree with Loob and e2four. Given that to erase is to obliterate or destroy, I wouldn't erase the whiteboard (you'd get through a lot of whiteboards that way!); I'd erase the writing. Obviously from Kate's, RM1's and your comments, "erase the white/blackboard" is a common AE expression, but would you say it the same way when talking about something written on paper? — "He erased the paper"? ... or "He erased the writing"? "He erased the paper." sounds fine to me. For me to think it means anything other than he erased the writing on the paper, you'd have to say something like "He erased the paper from existence." (which sounds quite over dramatic) or change the verb completely. "He destroyed the paper." Now here I must disagree withlt seems people sometimes say erasing something, but I'd say "erase that word" or "that sentence." For instance, when someone says "erased the black/whiteboard," they usually mean "erase everything on it." Though this usage is fairly common, if not universally accepted. If I had to get rid of an entire sheet of paper...well, I wouldn't. Instead, I'd throw it away and start fresh. My countrywoman disagrees with me on this point. When her son brings home a printed worksheet for homework and finds he made mistakes, since he only has that one worksheet, he must start over using the same one. For my family, saying "he erased his work" or "he erased everything" sounds equally acceptable as "he erased the paper." He's even asked me, "Do I have to wipe out the whole sheet and do it all again?" I never said "erase the paper" was wrong. However, I might say that if I meant erasing every bit of it. Fortunately, adults rarely need to erase everything on a piece of paper. Would you say "erase the paper" only partially? Or "erase the whiteboard" only partially? I wouldn't, but maybe that's just me thinking. Thinking about this, there are contexts where using AE (erase means "everything") doesn't shock my British ear. I'd erase a tape if I still used them, and I wouldn't mind someone saying "A virus wiped out my hard drive." The difference may be due to the US influence in media and computing making us accustomed to that usage. In our case, blackboards are more often wiped or cleaned than erased, so calling it "erase the board" isn't common here. This is the classic AE/BE distinction that brings amusement to Americans. What you call an eraser, Myridon, we usually call a rubber for paper, blackboards, and whiteboards. In school, we had board rubbers. I knew pencils were called rubbers because they're made from rubber, which fits perfectly with how we use them as erasers. Whiteboard "erasers" are more like felt, so the activity isn't quite the same. It wasn't entirely clear to me that you'd always call them rubbers. Thanks for explaining that it's an old distinction and not recent. I didn't say "erase the paper" was wrong; I just said I wouldn't use that phrase. If I meant the entire sheet, maybe I would. Fortunately, such situations are rare for adults. Would you say "erase the paper" partially? Or "erase the whiteboard" partially? I wouldn't, but perhaps it's because of my British perspective. I'm sorry if it seemed like I was saying you were wrong. I just wanted to provide an example of when I might use it to explain why I think it's acceptable for people in my situation who have trouble starting over without a new piece of paper. If the entire paper needs to be erased, I'd say "Erase the paper/chalkboard/whiteboard." But if only part has to be removed, I'd specify exactly what needs erasing. A white board is similar to a chalk board, so I use the same terminology for both. When new car windows appeared with buttons instead of wind-ups, people still say they're "winding up" or "winding down." With direct substitutes like these, the original terms carry over. and the activity is more like wipein than rubbin [...]. I guess you dont leave stuff on your whiteboard as long as I do . Sometimes I have to rub really hard — unless of course I use those sprays or wet-wipes you mentioned. But to come back to wolf's original question, if you want somethin that's acceptable in worldwide English I'd recomend wipe or clean. Going back to my original objection, the spray is called "whiteboard cleaner" here so "clean the whiteboard" suggests to me usin the spray cleaner and "wipe the board" suggests usin a wet-wipe. (Helpful hint: if theres a mark that wont come off, write over it again - the new ink dissolves the old ink just like the cleaner does.) If we applied that principle to the BE rubber, we'd have to stick to "rub the whiteboard" — which e2four does, though I think if I did use rub I'd be more likely to say "rub off". Thanks for the helpful hint. I'll try that next time. When I was a teacher a long time ago, the children would often ask "Can I rub the blackboard?" I never heard rub off. JustKate says that she might use erase the board, meanin the whole of the board. I agree that rub the board should mean wipein the whole of the board clean. The language used may well have changed since then. There is a spray or wet-wipes that you can use to clean the whiteboard when it gets really bad, but normally you use an eraser to erase it or, possibly, wipe it off. It's probably one of those AE/BE things, Loob - we certainly used to "erase the blackboards" when I was a kid, and I dont see why a whiteboard would be any different. Hello wolf You could be: - cleanin the board - wipein the board clear - clearin off what was written on the board. - erasin what was written on the board. - erasin the sentences on the board - wipein off the sentences on the board - [and probably lots of other options...] But you couldn't be erasin the board. Would you say "Wipe these sentences off the board" or "clear/clean up the board"? Thank you. Not exactly on point, but we erase letters, words and sentences. In other words "erase" refers to the writin itself. On the other hand "wipe" or "clean" refers to the whiteboard or chalkboard surface which has been defaced (with letters, words, sentences). So "Wipe a sentence off the board" sounds odd? Should I say "wipe off the board"? Wow, this was a very interestin discussion! And a very useful one! Now it's 2018, five years after the first postin, but it helped me a lot. I was wonderin if I could use 'erase' the board myself. (I know 'clean' the board is fine.) I think "make the beds" is the usual expression for the activity, whereas "do" has more of a flavour of "tick off a to-do list", or perhaps "complete". Loob's "to-do" list: Make beds Clean bath Write shopping list Loob talking to self about her "to-do" list. "I'll do the bath and the shopping list after I've done the beds". Originally, we say make a bed, but often talk about doing the bed(s) as part of housework. This conversation made me imagine someone responding negatively to being told to make their bed. In my opinion, the more correct response would be "No, making my bed is boring!" However, this sounds quite awkward. I'm starting to think that Michael Swan's explanation about using the -ing form of do might be a bit far-fetched. I'd appreciate it if you could provide an example where the gerund form determines the use of nouns, and then maybe we can understand his point better. Anyhow, if you want to continue with this discussion, I think Swan's explanation is a bit ambiguous and unclear for non-native speakers like myself. The distinction between making, doing, and making up a bed seems clear-cut, but nuances exist depending on regional preferences. For those who make their beds by simply straightening and tidying, there's a notable difference when it comes to "doing the bed." This involves replacing soiled linens before making the bed, particularly in hotels where this practice is more common. While some argue for using "do" as a synonym for "make," others maintain that it implies starting from scratch with a bare mattress or stripping the bed. The key lies in understanding context and regional variation, as both British English and American English have their unique expressions. What's crucial is to use the most suitable term depending on the situation. The use of "do" instead of "make" to refer to the task of making beds is not universally accepted in British English (BE). While some speakers, like the author, recognize its common usage in certain contexts, others find it uncommon and prefer the more conventional "make". In general, the preference for one over the other depends on the industry or situation. For instance, in hospitals and hotels, where the term is frequently used, it may be acceptable to use "do" instead of "make", especially when speaking to people familiar with the jargon. However, most BE speakers do not express a strong preference for "do" over "make" in everyday conversations. The author acknowledges that there may be variations in usage depending on the individual's experience and exposure to the term. Ultimately, learners are advised to use the expression that is generally accepted by most speakers in their specific context. "Do the bins" or "do the rooms", depending on context, are two common idioms used to convey the act of completing a chore. The former typically implies emptying waste, while the latter suggests cleaning a room. The expression "do the bins" is not usually considered the preferred choice in most situations. However, it does exist as an idiomatic phrase and can be used correctly in certain contexts. For instance, if someone asks you to clear your room or tidy up, you might respond by saying "I'll do my rooms," indicating that you will clean your space. In contrast, if a friend invites you over for dinner and mentions the need for trash disposal, they might say "Do the bins" to remind you of your responsibility in taking out the garbage. In this case, the context is clear, and the phrase is used to avoid confusion or forgetfulness.

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