Position of adjectives
I. Two or more adjectives
II. Adjectives used both before and after nouns

I. Two or more adjectives

When two or more adjectives precede a noun, they usually follow the order given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifying adjectives</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>opinion</td>
<td>nice, helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>size</td>
<td>big</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality</td>
<td>soft, hot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shape</td>
<td>round, triangular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>old, new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour adjectives</td>
<td>white, red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classifying adjectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participle adjective</td>
<td>broken, increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>origin</td>
<td>Czech, British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>material</td>
<td>plastic, wooden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>type/purpose</td>
<td>writing (desk)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

- *the growing Czech urban population*
  - part. adj. + origin + type

- *a horrible old broken wooden writing desk*
  - opinion + age + part. adj. + material + type/purpose (part of compound)

It is not recommended to use more than three adjectives to describe a noun. The long series of adjectives above is only an illustrative example of their usual order.

**Notes:**

- There are some adjectives that come **before all other adjectives.** Below is a list of the most common ones:
  - chief, entire, existing, first, following, last, main, next, past, principal, remaining, specific, usual.

  - *the principal up-to-date measurement methods*
  - *the entire British student population*

  When these adjectives are used with expressions of number/quantity, the **number/quantity** a) **follows** “first, last, next, past”:

    - *in the last few/two years*

  b) **precedes** “chief, principal, specific“:

    - *the two specific issues*
    - *the two principal sources*

  c) **can be used either before or after** “existing, following, main, remaining, usual“:

    - *in the remaining few/two years*
    - *in the two/few remaining years*
- **Comparatives and superlatives** are also used before the other adjectives:
  
  *the highest monthly inflation figures*

With comparatives and superlatives the **number/quantity comes first**:

*the two highest monthly inflation figures*

- If the **participle adjective/adjective** is **part of a compound**, it is placed immediately before the noun with which it forms the compound.

  *a broken wooden writing desk*  
  part. adj.+ material + part of compound

  *a big American hot dog*  
  size + origin + part of compound

- In English, **nouns** are often used as adjectives.

  *the student population*

- **A series of adjectives** of equal importance is set off by a **comma** if “and” can be used instead of a comma. Compare:

  *He cooperated with many international research institutions.*  
  *They cooperate with this famous, (and) internationally recognized, (and) generously funded Czech research institute.*

**II. Adjectives used both before and after nouns**

Some adjectives can be used both before and after nouns  
- **without a change of meaning:** affected, available, imaginable, obtained, possible, required, suitable

  *This is the only possible solution.*  
  Or: *This is the only solution possible.*

  The position after the noun is used mainly when the adjective is followed by a prepositional phrase or when it is understood from the context that this might be the case.

  *the results obtained (from our experiments)*

- **with a change of meaning:** concerned, involved, present

  *all the people present (who were there)*  
  *my present address (the address I have now)*  
  *the students involved (who took part in that experiment)*  
  *an involved explanation (complicated)*  
  *all those concerned (affected)*  
  *concerned teachers (worried)*

**Note** the difference between:

*the author’s main contribution to this field* (the main contribution of the author)  
*the main author’s contribution to this field* (the contribution of the main author)
EXERCISES

I. Complete the sentences, using the given adjectives in the correct order. Explain your choice.

Example:
He has ................................................................. lamp.  (reading, new, handy)
He has a handy new reading lamp. (opinion + age + purpose)

1. We obtained some ......................................................... information.
   (financial, useful, new)
2. They used a ................................................................. material for that purpose.
   (white, plastic, soft)
3. I’ve finished the ................................................................. drawings.
   (few, last, preparatory)
4. The Faculty employs a ......................................................... lecturer.
   (British, university, young)
5. The ................................................................. example was very helpful.
   (illustrative, short, first)
6. There is no ................................................................. solution to the problem.
   (all-embracing, easy)
7. I haven’t solved the ................................................................. equations yet.
   (differential, remaining, two)
8. Have you heard that ................................................................. laptops are popular with girls in
   their teens?
   (high-tech, pink)
9. She put the ring in a ................................................................. box.
   (round, silver, small)
10. Read carefully the ................................................................. notes.
    (following, explanatory, two)
11. The newly ................................................................. materials look very interesting.
    (published, teaching, English)
12. What were the ................................................................. reasons for his decision?
    (two, personal, main)
13. So far, there has been little research into the causes of the .................................................................
    ................................................................. rate.
    (juvenile, growing, crime)

II. Tick the correct phrase in italics. In some cases both phrases are possible.

1. We compared the expected results with the results obtained/the obtained results.
2. Crime in schools is on the increase. Concerned parents and teachers/Teachers and parents
   concerned are calling for regulations that would make schools a safer place.
3. I wasn’t able to follow that involved presentation/presentation involved. Do you have an
   idea of what the speaker was trying to tell us?
4. I’m afraid we won’t be able to finish that report in the time available/the available time.
5. The Head of the Department proposed a few changes in some of the courses. All the
present staff/All the staff present agreed.
6. The organization of the workshop was very good. I’d like to thank all the concerned staff/all the staff concerned.
7. Have you sent the Rector all the documents required/all the required documents?
8. Our Department has obtained a grant for a big research project. All the involved students/All the students involved will have opportunities to participate in international conferences.
9. Who is the present Polish President /the Polish President present?
10. Our visit to XY Ltd. was very interesting. The best company’s products/The company’s best products were on display in the main hall.