

The...the... with comparative adjectives

Comparison and contrast are expressed by the use of the...the... with comparative adjectives in parallel clauses. This structure is used to show proportionate increase or decrease.

Structure: *the + comparative adjective + clause + the + comparative adjective + clause*

The more adventurous it is, the more I like it. (NOT The more it is adventurous, the more I like it.)

The less I see him the more I like him.

The more he reads, the less he understands.

The older we grow, the wiser we become.

The higher you climb, the colder it gets.

The richer one grows, the greater one's worries.

The less you spend, the more you save.

The sooner they go, the better it is.

A short form of this structure is used in the expressions 'the more the merrier' and '...the better'.

'How do you like your coffee?' 'The stronger the better.'

'When should I start?' 'The earlier the better.'

Note that in this structure, the means 'by that much'.