
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Strong adjectives



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Rob

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Rob, and this is Catherine.

Catherine

Hi! Today we've got a **fantastic** programme for you. It's all about **strong adjectives**.

Rob

Yes, it is. We'll give you a **wonderful** explanation of what they are and how to use them...

Catherine

We'll also give you some very useful advice on how to use intensifiers with adjectives...

Rob

And there'll be a **fabulous** quiz...

Catherine

And finally we'll give you an absolutely **amazing** tip to help you learn vocabulary.

Rob

Wow. OK, let's get going then, there's no time to waste. Here's Tom. Now, he took his girlfriend to the cinema and then for dinner afterwards. Very romantic! Let's hear how the evening went. While you're listening, try to answer this question: was it a successful evening out?

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Tom

We went to see that new film - I thought it was **quite funny**, but Jenny thought it was **hilarious**. We went for a meal: The food was **not so bad** but the service was **absolutely terrible!** We waited nearly an hour to get our food. When it finally arrived, I was **absolutely starving!**

Rob

So – the meal didn't go too well: Tom and Jenny had to wait a long time for their food – nearly an hour! What do you think about that Catherine?

Catherine

I wouldn't last that long. Twenty minutes, and I'd be gone.

Rob

Well, luckily, they liked the film. Listen to this clip:

INSERT | CLIP |

I thought it was **quite funny**, but Jenny thought it was **hilarious**.

Catherine

Tom said he thought the film was **quite funny**. **Quite funny**. Now, when we use an ordinary adjective, like **funny**, we can add a word like **quite**, or **very**, or **just a little bit**, to give more information about the adjective.

Rob

So, we can say the film was **quite funny**, or **very funny**, or **just a little bit funny**. These words are called intensifiers – and they are **quite useful**.

Catherine

They're **very useful** actually. Yes. So Tom thought the film was funny; but Jenny thought it was **hilarious**. And the word **hilarious** means – very, very funny.

Rob

Hilarious is a special kind of adjective – it already includes the idea of **very**.

Catherine

Right, and we call this type of adjective a strong adjective, and there are lots of them. For example, to mean **very good**, we can say:

Rob

Wonderful! Fabulous! Amazing!

Catherine

Thank you Rob. Three **fantastic** words there. But most of the time, we don't use intensifiers like **quite**, or **very**, or **just a little bit with** these strong adjectives, and that's because the idea of **very** is already in the word. So for example, **hilarious** means **very funny**, so **a little bit hilarious** would mean **a little bit very funny**, and that doesn't make sense, does it Rob?

Rob

Absolutely not, no. OK, well back to the clip. Tom used a couple of other strong adjectives, too. Listen again. What's the strong adjective?

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

The food was **not so bad** but the service was **absolutely terrible!**

Catherine

Well, Tom used the ordinary adjective **bad**, and he used it with an intensifier when he said **not so bad**.

Rob

But the strong adjective was **terrible**. **Terrible** means **very bad**.

Catherine

And this time, Tom used an intensifier that we usually only use with strong adjectives – he said it was **absolutely terrible**. So, when we want to make a strong adjective even stronger, we need to use one of these special intensifiers, like **absolutely**. So, we say **very bad**, but we say **absolutely terrible**.

Rob

And we don't usually say **absolutely bad**. Here's Tom using another strong adjective. Listen carefully, and see if you can catch it!

INSERT 1 CLIP 3

We waited for nearly an hour to get our food. When it finally arrived, I was **absolutely starving!**

Catherine

Tom used the phrase **absolutely starving**. **Starving** is a strong adjective, which means **very hungry**, and he used the intensifier **absolutely** to make it even stronger. **Absolutely starving**.

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6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Rob

And today our **absolutely wonderful** topic is strong adjectives and intensifiers.

Catherine

And now it's time for a very quick quiz. Question one. What is the strong adjective for **funny**?

Rob

And the answer is **hilarious**. Question two. What is the strong adjective and intensifier for **very bad**?

Catherine

And the answer is **absolutely terrible**. Just one more question! Can you name three strong adjectives that mean **good**?

Rob

And in the programme we had **fantastic, wonderful, fabulous** and **amazing**, which describes me I think. And if you got all those right, you're **absolutely wonderful**.

Catherine

And we've just got time for that **fantastic** vocabulary tip we promised you. When you're learning adjectives, make a picture in your mind of someone or something that reminds you of that adjective. It will help you remember the word. For example, I think that Rob is **absolutely fantastic**.

Rob

You're just saying that Catherine, thank you very much.

Catherine

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary. Bye!

Rob

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Normal adjectives	Strong adjectives
funny	hilarious
bad	terrible
good	wonderful, amazing, fantastic, fabulous

Intensifiers for normal adjectives	Intensifiers for strong adjectives
very	absolutely
quite	
not so	
just a little bit	