

Adjectives — Rengdêr

Describing nouns • Ezafe links • Comparison • Practice

Learning objectives — Armancên fêrbûnê

Recognize descriptive adjectives (rengdêr), place them in noun phrases, distinguish attributive and predicative use, recognize common ezafe linkers, and form basic comparisons. The examples use a pedagogical standard of Kurmanji; dialects and case environments can vary.

1. What is an adjective? — Rengdêr çi ye?

An adjective describes a person, thing, place or quality. Common examples: mezin (big), biçûk (small), baş (good), xirab (bad), nû (new), kevn (old), dirêj (long/tall), kurt (short), sor (red), reş (black), spî (white), germ (warm), sar (cold).

2. Adjectives in a noun phrase

In many ordinary Kurmanji noun phrases, a descriptive adjective follows the noun and is linked by ezafe. Compare mêrê mezin (the big man), jina mezin (the big woman), zarokên biçûk (the small children). Unlike English big house, the adjective typically follows the noun: mala mezin (the big house).

3. Ezafe: a linking element — Îzafe

Ezafe links a noun to a following adjective or possessor. In common direct-case definite patterns, a masculine singular noun can take -ê (mêrê mezin), a feminine singular noun -a (jina mezin), and a plural noun -ên (zarokên biçûk). These examples show noun-phrase linking; do not interpret the suffix as an ending on the adjective itself. Ezafe varies with case, definiteness and dialect, so this is a starter chart, not a complete paradigm.

4. Ezafe comparison table

Noun type	Noun + adjective	English
Masculine singular	mêrê mezin	the big man
Feminine singular	jina mezin	the big woman
Plural	zarokên biçûk	the small children

5. Attributive versus predicative adjectives

Attributive: mêrê mezin — the big man; jina baş — the good woman. Predicative: Ev mal mezin e. — This house is big. Ev pirtûk nû ye. — This book is new. A predicative adjective does not require the same noun-adjective ezafe construction.

6. Position and word order

English often places adjectives before nouns: a new book. Kurmanji commonly uses a noun followed by ezafe and adjective: pirtûka nû. Do not mechanically transfer English adjective order into Kurmanji.

7. Colours — Reng

sor — red; şîn — blue; kesk — green; zer — yellow; reş — black; spî — white. Example: gula sor — the red flower; gulên sor — the red flowers. The noun phrase supplies the linker; the adjective sor stays recognizable.

8. Describing people and places

mêrê dirêj — the tall man; zarokê biçûk — the small child (masculine example); bajarê mezin — the big city (masculine example). Natural word choice for human height can vary; dirêj also means long. Keep noun gender and meaning in mind.

9. Comparative: -tir — Berawirdkirin

The suffix -tir often forms a comparative adjective: mezin → mezintir (bigger), biçûk → biçûktir (smaller), baş → baştir (better), dirêj → dirêjtir (longer/taller). Example: Ev mal ji wê malê mezintir e. — This house is bigger than that house. The comparative construction and case marking deserve attention in longer sentences.

10. Superlative: herî — Herî

A common superlative strategy uses herî before the adjective: herî mezin (the biggest / largest), herî baş (the best), herî biçûk (the smallest). Example: Ev herî baş e. — This is the best. Some sources also describe suffixal superlative forms; this lesson teaches the transparent herî construction.

11. Comparison table

Base adjective	Comparative (-tir)	Superlative (herî)
mezin	mezintir	herî mezin
biçûk	biçûktir	herî biçûk
baş	baştir	herî baş
dirêj	dirêjtir	herî dirêj

12. Adjective versus adverb

An adjective describes a noun: pirtûka nû (the new book). An adverb modifies a verb or clause; Kurmanji does not always mark the adjective/adverb distinction the way English does. Lesson 13 examines adverbs in detail.

13. Negation in descriptions

Ev mal mezin nîne. — This house is not big. Compare affirmative Ev mal mezin e. — This house is big. Copular forms and negation can differ with person and context; avoid treating nîne as the negative of every possible predicate.

14. Mini dialogue — Axaftin

A: Ev pirtûk çawa ye? — What is this book like? B: Ev pirtûk baş e. — This book is good. A: Kîjan pirtûk baştir e? — Which book is better? B: Ev pirtûk baştir e. — This book is better.

15. Frequent mistakes — Çewtiyên gelemperî

Do not assume that Kurmanji adjective placement copies English; omit ezafe in every attributive phrase; attach the gender marker to the adjective instead of the noun; confuse -tir (comparative) with herî (superlative); or assume the simple starter ezafe chart covers every oblique, indefinite and dialectal pattern.

16. Exercises — Rahênan

A. Translate: mezin, biçûk, nû, sor, baş. B. Match: mêrê mezin; jina mezin; zarokên biçûk. C. Fill: Ev mal ____ e. (big) D. Make comparatives: baş, mezin, dirêj. E. Make superlatives: baş, biçûk. F. Translate: Ev pirtûk nû ye. G. Which part of mêrê mezin carries ezafe? H. Explain the difference between pirtûka nû and Ev pirtûk nû ye.

17. Answer key — Bersiv

A. big; small; new; red; good. B. the big man; the big woman; the small children. C. mezin. D. baştir, mezintir, dirêjtir. E. herî baş, herî biçûk. F. This book is new. G. The noun mêr, in the form mêrê. H. pirtûka nû is a noun phrase with an attributive adjective; Ev pirtûk nû ye is a sentence with a predicative adjective.

18. Sources and editorial note — Çavkanî

Suggested reference grammars for checking Kurmanji morphosyntax include W. M. Thackston, *Kurmanji Kurdish: A Reference Grammar* (2006), and descriptive work by Geoffrey Haig and Ergin Öpengin. This is an introductory educational synthesis, not a quotation from those works. Noun gender, ezafe, case and dialectal usage should receive native-speaker review before treating examples as a universal standard.

19. Next lesson — Dersa pêş

Lesson 13 — Adverbs (Hoker): time, manner, place, frequency and sentence modification.