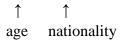
## Adjective Order By Heather Wright

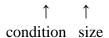
Words that are used to describe nouns (people, places, things, or ideas) are called adjectives. You can identify adjectives by asking one of the following questions and seeing if the word answers any of these questions: which one?, what kind?, how many?, how much?, or whose? The English language normally uses a particular word order when using more than one adjective to describe a noun. Have you ever asked yourself why a phrase like the metal, ugly, big trash can is incorrect, and the ugly, blue, metal trash can is correct? Below is an explanation with examples:

- 1. Opinion: Ugly, beautiful, quiet, right, delicious, wonderful, terrible
- 2. Size: Short, big, small, huge, tiny, miniscule, large
- 3. Shape: Round, square, triangular, circular, octagonal
- 4. Condition or state: Wet, rich, intelligent, surprised, hungry, empty
- 5. Age: Old, young, ancient, antique, teenage
- 6. Color: Yellow, reddish, mauve, beige, blue-green, off-white
- 7. Pattern: Striped, polka dotted, checked, plaid
- 8. Origin/Nationality: Southern, French, Korean, Saudi, African, Asian
- 9. Material: Cloth, metal, paper, aluminum
- 10. Purpose: Shopping, drinking, dining

In the early 1990s, a new British author began writing the first *Harry Potter* book.\*



The children's many long pairs of pajamas were too small.



The toy store had no more square plastic shopping baskets.



The apples in the supermarket were huge, round, and green.\*



\*When the list of three or more adjectives comes after a linking verb (verbs that connect the subject with any words that give information about the subject, rather than showing action) to end the sentence, commas are included in the list. If there are only two adjectives after a linking verb, separate them with *and*, as in *The children quickly became hungry and thirsty*.

You may hear people use a slightly different order when speaking; the order for adjectives listed is general, and some people may speak differently.

Try a few of these exercises to practice using the correct adjective order. Place the adjectives in the correct order in each sentence.

1.	The girl received gifts for her birthday. (tiny, multiple)
2.	All of the students in class took the test. (computerized, simple)
3.	Before going to the greenhouse, the horticulture students put on their gloves. (rubber, new, gardening)
4.	The women waited for the server to come to their table. (refined, Chinese)
5.	The box was full of and puppies. (white, spotted, black)
6.	The state of Colorado is,, and (square, large, mountainous)
7.	Did you know that cheetahs are,, and? (carnivorous, beautiful, endangered)
8.	The furniture was sold yesterday.  (Swedish, green)

## Adjective Order Answer Key By Heather Wright

- 1. The girl received **multiple** (**condition**) **tiny** (**size**) gifts for her birthday.
- 2. All of the students in the class took the **simple (opinion) computerized (condition)** test.
- 3. Before going to the greenhouse, the horticulture students put on their **new (age) rubber** (material) gardening (purpose) gloves.
- 4. The **refined (condition) Chinese (nationality)** women waited for the server to come to their table.
- 5. The box was full of black (color) and white (color) spotted (pattern) puppies.\*
  - \*The two adjectives are part of a phrase, so they are separated by *and*. For example, *They read the old black and white* newspaper or *They shop in the big* and tall section of the store.
- 6. The state of Colorado is large (size), square (shape), and mountainous (condition/state).
- 7. Did you know that cheetahs are **beautiful** (**opinion**), **carnivorous** (**state/condition**), and **endangered** (**state/condition**)?
- 8. The **green (color) Swedish (nationality)** furniture was sold yesterday.