



## Word order of adjectives (1)

It is difficult to give clear rules to follow about the position of adjectives before the noun. The list below, however, should be of value as a useful check in given cases. The following general points should also be remembered.

- 1) We seldom use **and** except when the adjectives are a complement, following **be**:

*His work is untidy and unsatisfactory.*

- 2) We usually put the more or most precise adjective nearest the noun, but it is not always easy to decide which is more precise. When in doubt, consult the examples and order given below:

*All the **first three** competitors broke the record.* (1,2,3,4)

*The **beautiful intelligent** girl fell in love with **the tall young** man.* (2,5,6 and 2,7,8)

*There was a **round green** spot on **the carved wooden Japanese** screen.* (9,10 and 2,11,12,13)

*He had a **beautiful old ivory** chess piece.* (5,8,12,14)

- 1) **both, all or half**
- 2) **the**
- 3) Ordinal number (**first, last**)
- 4) Cardinal number (**one, three**)
- 5) General judgement (**good, bad, nice, beautiful**)
- 6) General judgement (**mental - intelligent, stupid**)
- 7) Measurement (**big, tall**)
- 8) Age or temperature (**old, young, hot**)
- 9) Shape (**round, square**)
- 10) Colour (**red, green**)
- 11) Verb participle form (**carved, boiling**)
- 12) Material (**wooden**)
- 13) Origin, nationality (**French, Mediterranean**)
- 14) Noun in apposition (**steel, cigarette**)