



Least

We use the quantifier **least** to talk about quantities, amounts and degree.
(The) **least** is the **superlative form of little**, which indicates insufficient quantity in the singular form.

There's little (= not enough) butter, so we can't bake cookies.

THE LEAST

We use *the least* to make the superlative forms of longer adjectives and the majority of adverbs:

*Jack seems to be **the least** worried about the exam.*

***The least** common minerals are also the most expensive.*

*The machines that worked (the) **least** efficiently were replaced.*

We use *the least* with a noun to mean 'less than all of the others':

*He did **the least** work of any of us.*

We use *least* and *the least* with a verb as an adverb:

*None of them worked much, but John worked **the least**.*

AT LEAST

We use *at least* (and with more emphasis *at the very least*) to talk about a **minimum number or amount**, meaning 'no less than': *There were **at least** twenty people there.*

We also use *at least* to **express a minimum of what we expect to happen**, usually when we are annoyed about something: *You could **at least** have phoned me to say you weren't coming. I waited for ages.*

We also use *at least* to introduce **something positive in a situation that seems negative**:

*It's a shame it's so cold, but **at least** it isn't raining.*

If you cannot
be positive,
then at least
be quiet.

- Joel Osteen -