

English V

Countable Nouns and Quantifiers

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Lesson 5

Countable Nouns

**Most nouns have singular and plural forms.
They are countable nouns.**

e.g. one letter, two letters.

- There is **a letter** on the table for you. (singular)
- There are **letters** on the table for you. (plural)

Countable Nouns

You can use “an” and “a” with singular countable nouns.

e.g. an umbrella, a wheel, a mistake.

- It's raining so I need **an umbrella**.
- I made **a mistake**.
- This is **a job** for Superman.

Countable Nouns

You can use plural countable nouns alone.

e.g. apples, bees, and clouds.

- There are **clouds** in the sky today.
- There are **bees** making honey.
- We eat **apples** for breakfast.

Uncountable Nouns

Some nouns only have one form. They are **uncountable nouns**.

e.g. money

There is no **money** in my bank account.

There is a lot of **money** in my bank account.

Uncountable Nouns

Many uncountable nouns refer to substances.

e.g. chocolate, water, coffee, milk, sugar, salt, cheese, bread, rice, wood, glass, plastic, soap, toothpaste.

- Do you have any **chocolate**?
- The **milk** is sour – let's make **cheese**.
- **Rice** is only edible when it has been cooked.

Uncountable Nouns

Many uncountable nouns refer to abstract ideas or emotions.

e.g. love, sadness, happiness, education, knowledge, and grammar.

- Money can't buy **love**.
- We like to enjoy **happiness**.
- This **education** is priceless.

Uncountable Nouns

You cannot use an article with an uncountable noun.

e.g. time, sand, and electricity.

- We need **electricity** to use our heater.
- I lost track of **time** and we stayed up very late.
- The beaches in Brazil have very nice **sand**.

Quantifiers

It is very common to use “any”, “many”, or “some” with plural nouns and uncountable nouns. These are called “Quantifiers”.

- They don't listen to *any* **advice**.
- We don't have *any* **toys** for the children.
- There are *many* **lessons** in life, this is just one more.
- It is important to have *some* **knowledge** of grammar.

MUCH - MANY A LOT OF - LOTS OF

= a large quantity of something

Much and *Many* are mainly used in **negative sentences** and **questions**. They are **not** common in affirmative sentences though still possible.
Much is used with **uncountable** nouns.
Many is used with **plural countable** nouns.

MUCH

+ UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS

- I don't have **much** time.
- He doesn't need **much** money.
- Does it use **much** electricity?

MANY

+ PLURAL COUNTABLE NOUNS

- There aren't **many** chairs in the room.
- I don't have **many** friends.
- Do you think **many** people will go?

With **affirmative sentences**, we prefer **a lot of** instead of *much/many*.
A lot of / lots of are **not** common in negative sentences or questions.
A lot of can be used with **countable** nouns and **uncountable** nouns.
a lot of = lots of

A LOT OF

+ UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS

- I need **a lot of** coffee.
(= I need **lots of** coffee.)
- There is **a lot of** traffic today.

A LOT OF

+ PLURAL COUNTABLE NOUNS

- She has **a lot of** friends.
(= She has **lots of** friends.)
- There are **a lot of** cars on the street.

FEW - LITTLE

A FEW - A LITTLE

= a small quantity; a small amount

FEW + Plural Countable Nouns	= not many ; not enough; nearly no ...
A FEW + Plural Countable Nouns	= some ; a small amount
LITTLE + Uncountable Nouns	= not much ; not enough; nearly no ...
A LITTLE + Uncountable Nouns	= some ; a small amount

FEW = NOT MANY

(FEW normally conveys a negative idea)

- He has **few** good friends.
(negative idea - not enough)
- **Few** people went to the concert.
- There are **few** honest politicians.

LITTLE = NOT MUCH

(LITTLE normally conveys a negative idea)

- There was **little** time to finish it.
(negative idea - nearly no time)
- He has **little** patience with others.
- They have **little** money to spend.

A FEW = SOME (a small amount)

(A FEW normally conveys a positive idea)

- He has **a few** friends that will help.
(positive idea - a small amount)
- I have **a few** days off next month.
- She has won **a few** awards.

A LITTLE = SOME (a small amount)

(A LITTLE normally conveys a positive idea)

- I have **a little** milk you can use.
(positive idea - a small amount)
- She has **a little** time to relax now.
- I have earned **a little** extra money.