**Grammar Review: Types of Nouns**

**Singular & Plural Nouns**

Phrases and other parts of speech can also behave like nouns and can be the subject in a sentence, as in ***Jogging*** *is a fun exercise*. Here, the verb *jogging* acts like a noun and is the subject of the sentence.

Subject

Objects

Mother cooks rice - Active sentence

**Sub (noun) v o(noun) SVO**

**Mother cooks**

**Sub - verb SV**

**SENTENCE (HAS A VERB) VS I do**

**PHRASE (NO VERB) VS**

**UTTERANCE**

**Common Nouns & Proper Nouns**

1. [*Common nouns*](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/common-noun) are nonspecific. They refer to a broad class of people, places, or things (like the generic *coffee*), so they’re not capitalized.

* **common nouns**:  
  *house*, *cat*, *girl*, *foot*, *country capitalization*
* **The teacher/~~Teacher~~ conducted the class**
* **The manger/~~Manager~~ signed the document**

Some nouns can be either proper or common depending on the context. For example, a *canyon* is common, while the *Grand Canyon* is proper because it’s the name of a specific place.

1. [*Proper nouns*](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/proper-noun) help distinguish a specific person, place, or thing. These words should be capitalized. Some examples are brand names like *Starbucks* and personal names like *Jenny*.

* **proper nouns:**  
  *Spain*, *Fido*, *Sony*
* **country –** common noun
* **Spain –** Proper noun

television – Common noun

A Sony – Proper noun

girl – common noun

Jane – Proper noun

One way you can treat a common noun as a proper noun is by using [personification](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/personification). *Personification* is giving human attributes to nonhuman objects or ideas. An example of this is in the poem “Because I could not stop for Death” by Emily Dickinson: “Because I could not stop for **Death** – / He kindly stopped for me.” Here, the poet talks about death as if this concept is a person.

**Concrete Nouns & Abstract Nouns**

1. A *concrete noun* is something that can be perceived through one of the five senses. A cat is something you can see, hear, touch, and smell, so it is a concrete noun.

* **concrete nouns**:  
  *table*, *apple*, *rabbit*, *ear*

1. .[*Abstract nouns*](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/abstract-noun) are intangible ideas. They’re not things people can see, smell, hear, or touch. Common examples include emotions, social concepts, political theories, and character traits. Here is one example: ***anger*** *is an emotion that can inspire change*.

* **abstract nouns:**  
  *love*, *creativity*, [*democracy*](https://www.dictionary.com/e/politics/democracy/)

**Collective nouns**

A [*collective noun*](https://www.dictionary.com/e/collective-nouns/?itm_source=parsely-api) describes a group of things, and it may be singular or plural, depending on how it’s used. A *singular collective noun* refers to a group that functions as one unit or performs the same action at the same time. For example: *The* ***team*** *plays in the main gym*.

* **singular collective nouns:**  
  *crowd*, *flock*, *committee*, *a hundred dollars*
* **school/shoal of fish**
* **fleet of ships – objects**
* **bunch of flowers**
* **pack of wolves**
* **herd of elephants/cows/ buffaloes/deer/**
* **swarms of bees/ swarm of bees/flies**
* **a bevy of girls**
* **A group of people/girls/boys – ~~animals~~**
* **~~Arm~~y of ants**
* **Heap of rice/ hay**
* **Compound noun (morphological process)**
* **Lexis- vocabulary**

A *compound noun* combines two words in one. Many of them are connected by a hyphen. For example, classmate and swimming pool.

Tooth – n

Paste – n

Toothpaste – compound noun

* **compound nouns**:  
  *toothpaste*, *haircut*, *output*

Compound nouns have three different forms:

1. open or spaced - space between words (**bus stop, Post office**)
2. hyphenated - hyphen between words (**mother-in-law**)
3. closed or solid - no space or hyphen between words (**football**)

Whitehouse- Greenhouse Adj + Noun (Morphological Processes)

White – adjective

House - noun

Whitehouse -

Chairman - chair - man

/Motherland - Noun + Noun

Underground/ Overview – Prep + Noun

Sky-blue / Skin-deep – Noun + Adj

Bittersweet / icy-cold – Adj + Adj

Frying Pan/ Breaking News / Test Cricket -Verb +Noun

**Countable nouns & Uncountable/Mass Nouns**

1. A *countable noun* is one that you can count. When you have three books or ten pennies, [you are](https://www.dictionary.com/e/slang/you-are/) describing a noun that is countable.

* **countable nouns**:  
  *table*, *apple*, *rabbit*, *ear*

1. An *uncountable noun* (also known as a mass noun) is one that cannot be counted. For example, gases cannot be counted. You can’t say you have one air or three air. So air is an uncountable noun and will always be singular.

* **uncountable nouns**:  
  *salt*, *seafood*, *luggage*, *advice, music, knowledge*
* **jewelry, equipment, information, homework, furniture etc**

**I have some information for you**

**I have a piece of information for you - sing**

* works
* advice~~s~~ (n) vs advise (v)
* Practice (n) vs Practise (v)
* Quantifiers with count and uncount nouns
* We can use these quantifiers with **both** [**count**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/count-nouns) **and** [**uncount**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/uncount-nouns)nouns:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *all* | *some* | *more* | *a lot of* | *enough* |
| *no* | *any* | *most* | *lots of* | *less* |

* *We have* ***lots of time****.  
  Joe has* ***lots of friends****.  
  I can't go out. I've got* ***no money****.  
  There was a lot of food but* ***no drinks****.*
* **Level: intermediate**
* These more **colloquial forms** are also used with both count and uncount nouns:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *plenty of* | *heaps of* | *a load of* | *loads of* | *tons of* |

* *We have* ***loads of time****.  
  Joe has* ***plenty of friends****.  
  There was* ***heaps of food****.*
* Quantifiers with count nouns
* Some quantifiers can be used **only with count nouns**:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *(not) many* | *each* | *either* | *(a) few* |
| *several* | *both* | *neither* | *fewer* |

* These more **colloquial forms** are used only with count nouns:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *a couple of* | *hundreds of* | *thousands of* |

* *I’ll be back in* ***a couple of minutes****.  
  There were* ***hundreds of people*** *at the meeting.*
* Quantifiers with uncount nouns
* Some quantifiers can be used **only with uncount nouns**:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *(not) much* | *a bit of* | *a little* |
| *I little knew that we were meant to be together – I didn’t know*  *I study hard*  *I hardly study – I don’t study at all* |  |  |

* *Would you like* ***a little wine****?  
  Could I have* ***a bit of butter****, please?*
* These quantifiers are used particularly with **abstract nouns** such as *time*, *money* and *trouble*:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *a great deal of* | *a good deal of* |

* *It will probably cost* ***a great deal of money.*** *He spent* ***a good deal of time*** *watching television.*

**Material Nouns**

Note that all nouns are more than one type. For example, **common nouns** can be **concrete nouns** or **abstract nouns**. (The **common noun** *danger* is an **abstract noun**.)

And the same noun can change its type according to meaning. For example, the noun *light* can be **uncountable** (light in general) or **countable** (lamp).

[**Attributive Nouns**](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-attributive-noun-1689012)

An **attributive noun** is a noun that serves as an adjective in front of another noun--such as "*nursery* school" and "*birthday* party."

Because so many nouns can serve as adjective equivalents, it's more accurate to regard *attributive* as a function than as a type. The clustering of nouns in front of another noun is sometimes called [*stacking*](https://www.thoughtco.com/stacking-words-1692132).

[**Denominal Nouns**](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-denominal-noun-1690378)

A **denominal noun** is a noun that's formed from another noun, usually by adding a suffix—such as *guitar****ist*** and *spoon****ful***.

But don't count on consistency. While a *librar****ian*** usually works in a library and a *seminar****ian*** usually studies in a seminary, a *vegetar****ian*** can show up anywhere. (See [Common Suffixes in English](https://www.thoughtco.com/common-suffixes-in-english-1692725).)

[**Verbal Nouns**](https://www.thoughtco.com/verbal-noun-1692582)

A **verbal noun** (sometimes called a [gerund](https://www.thoughtco.com/gerund-in-grammar-1690897)) is a noun that's derived from a verb (usually by adding the suffix *-ing*) and that exhibits the ordinary properties of a noun—for example, "My mother didn't like the idea of my *writ****ing*** a book about her."  
Most contemporary linguists distinguish [verbals](https://www.thoughtco.com/verbal-grammar-1692584) from [deverbals](https://www.thoughtco.com/deverbal-grammar-term-1690384), but not always in precisely the same way.

* His *firing* of William was a mistake.
* My mother didn't like the idea of my *writing* a book about her.

In the first sentence, the word *firing* derives from the word *fire* but functions as a verbal noun. In the second sentence, the word *writing* derives from the verb *write*, but it functions here as a verbal noun.

[**Denominal nouns**](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-denominal-noun-1690378)**:**A denominal noun is formed from another noun, usually by adding a [suffix](https://www.thoughtco.com/suffix-grammar-1692159), such as *villager* (from *village*), *New Yorker* (from *New York*)*, booklet* (from *book*), *limeade* (from *lime),* guitarist (from *guitar*), *spoonful* (from *spoon*), and librarian (from *library*).

Denominal nouns are context-sensitive; they depend on the context for their meaning. For example, while a *librarian* usually *works* in a library, a *seminarian* usually *studies* in a seminary.

**Additional: Nouns & Quantifiers**

**Level: beginner**

We use quantifiers when we want to give someone information about the number of something: **how much** or **how many**.

Sometimes we use a quantifierin the place of a [**determiner**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/specific-and-general-determiners):

***Most children*** *start school at the age of five.  
We ate* ***some bread and butter****.  
We saw* ***lots of birds****.*

In [English grammar](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-english-grammar-1690579), a *determiner* is a word or a group of words that specifies, identifies, or quantifies the noun or [noun phrase](https://www.thoughtco.com/noun-phrase-or-np-1691441) that follows it. It is also known as a *prenominal modifier*. Basically, determiners come at the start of a noun phrase and tell more about what comes after it (or them, in the case of a phrase that has more than one determiner before the noun).

Determiners include articles (*a, an, the*), [cardinal numbers](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-cardinal-number-1689824) (*one, two, three*...) and [ordinal numbers](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-an-ordinal-number-1691459) (*first, second, third*...), demonstratives (*this, that, these, those*), partitives (*some of, piece of*, and others), quantifiers (*most, all*, and others), difference words (*other*, *another*), and possessive determiners (*my, your, his, her, its, our,* *their*).

Authors Martha Kolln and Robert Funk describe them this way: "Determiners signal nouns in a variety of ways: They may define the relationship of the noun to the speaker or listener (or reader); they may identify the noun as *specific* or *general*; they may *quantify* it specifically or refer to quantity in general." ("Understanding English Grammar,*"* 5th ed. Allyn and Bacon, 1998)

**Rules on Multiple Determiners**

English has rules on word order, such as when there are multiple adjectives in a row modifying the same noun (quantity before age, before color, for example). The same goes for when you use multiple determiners in a row.

"When there is more than one determiner, follow these useful rules:  
a) Place *all* and *both* in front of other determiners.  
E.g. We ate *all the* food. *Both my* sons are at college.  
b) Place *what* and *such* in front of *a* and *an* in [exclamations](https://www.thoughtco.com/exclamation-language-term-1690685).  
E.g. *What an* awful day! I've never seen *such a* crowd!  
c) Place *many, much, more, most, few, little* after other determiners.  
E.g. *His many* successes made him famous. They have *no more* food. *What little* money I have is yours."​

(Geoffrey N. Leech, Benita Cruickshank, and Roz Ivanič, "An A-Z of English Grammar & Usage," 2nd ed. Longman, 2001)

**Count and Noncount Nouns**

Some determiners work with count nouns, and some don't. For example, *many* attaches to count nouns, such as "The child had *many* marbles." In contrast, you would not use *much* to attach to count nouns such as *marbles* but noncount nouns such as *work,*for example in, "The college student had *much* work to finish before finals week." Other determiners work with either one, such as *all*: "The child had *all* the marbles" and "The college student had *all the* work to finish before finals week."

**Members of groups**

We put a noun directly after a quantifier when we are talking about members of **a group in general**:

***Few snakes*** *are dangerous.****Most children*** *like chocolate.  
I never have* ***enough money****.*

but if we are talking about members of a **specific group**, we use ***of the*** as well:

***Few of the snakes in this zoo*** *are dangerous.****Most of the boys at my school*** *play football.  
He’s spent* ***all (of) the money that we gave him****.****Both (of) the chairs in my office*** *are broken.*

Note: with *all* and *both,* we don’t need to use *of.* We can say *all the …* and *both the … .*

***both*, *either* and *neither***

If we are talking about **two people or things**, we use the quantifiers *both*, *either* and *neither*:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| One supermarket | Two supermarkets | More than two supermarkets |
| The supermarket was closed. | **Both** the supermarkets **were** closed. | All the supermarkets were closed. |
| The supermarket wasn’t open. | **Neither** of the supermarkets **was** open. | None of the supermarkets were open. |
| I don’t think the supermarket was open. | I don’t think **either** of the supermarkets **was** open. | I don’t think any of the supermarkets were open. |

Note that nouns with *both* have a **plural verb** but nouns with *either* and *neither* have a **singular verb**.

***every* and *each***

We use the quantifiers ***every*** and ***each*** with **singular nouns** to mean *all*:

*There was a party in* ***every street****.* (= There were parties in all the streets.)  
***Every shop*** *was decorated with flowers*. (= All the shops were decorated with flowers.)  
***Each child*** *was given a prize*. (= All the children were given a prize.)  
*There was a prize in* ***each competition***. (= There were prizes in all the competitions.)

We often use *every* to talk about times like **days**, **weeks** and **years**:

*When we were children, we had holidays at our grandmother's* ***every year****.  
When we stayed at my grandmother's house, we went to the beach* ***every day****.  
We visit our daughter* ***every Christmas****.*

We do not use a determiner with *every* and *each*:

*Every shop was decorated with flowers.* (NOT *~~The every shop~~*)  
*Each child was given a prize.* (NOT *~~The each child~~*)

***some* and *any***

We do not normally use the quantifier ***some*** in [negative and interrogative](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/questions-and-negatives) sentences. We normally use ***any***:

***Do*** *you have* ***any*** *children?****Did*** *you see* ***any*** *friends?  
We* ***don't*** *have* ***any*** *children.  
I* ***didn't*** *see* ***any*** *friends.  
We saw* ***some*** *lions at the zoo, but we* ***didn't*** *see* ***any*** *tigers.*

but we can use *some* for offers and requests:

*Would you like* ***some*** *tea?  
I want* ***some*** *apples, please.*