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GRAMMAR LAND





Common and Proper Nouns

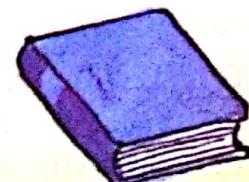
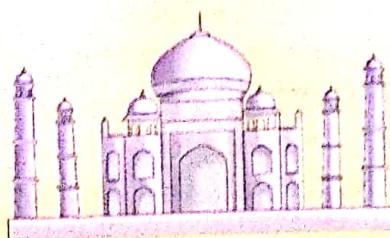
A **common noun** refers to a person, place, animal or thing in general.

- girl
- doctor
- tree
- town
- mountain
- cat
- bicycle
- pen



A **proper noun** is a special name we give to a person, place, animal or thing. Names of languages, days of the week, months of the year and names of books or films are also proper nouns. They always begin with capital letters.

- Aditi → name of a girl
- Taj Mahal → name of a monument/building
- Mumbai → name of a city
- Lux → name of a soap
- English, Spanish, Russian → languages
- January, February, July → months of the year
- Monday, Wednesday, Friday → days of the week
- *The Mystery of the Missing Cat, Around the World in Eighty Days* → books



A Identify the correct common noun for the list of proper nouns given in column A. Write person/place/language/day/month/book.

A	B
1. Kolkata	place
2. The Jungle Book	
3. German	
4. Mohan	
5. August	
6. Saturday	
7. Paris	
8. Sanskrit	



Singular and Plural Nouns

A **singular noun** refers to only one person, place or thing.

A **plural noun** refers to more than one person, place or thing.

B Circle the singular nouns and underline the plural nouns in these sentences.

1. The boy has two apples.
2. Close the windows, but leave the door open.
3. The bicycles have fallen into the river.
4. The cat has frightened the pigeons.
5. Put your toys away in the cupboard.
6. There are lots of hills in this part of the country.
7. My sister has gone to buy some balloons.



Regular and Irregular Plurals

Plurals are of two kinds—regular and irregular. Nouns that form plurals by adding *-s* or *-es* are called **regular plurals**. However, some nouns form plurals by changing their spelling. They are called **irregular plurals**.

Here is a table with examples to show regular and irregular plurals.

	Type of nouns	Nouns	Plurals
Regular plurals	Most nouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • girl • doctor • town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • girls • doctors • towns
	Nouns ending with <i>-s</i> , <i>-ss</i> , <i>-sh</i> , <i>-ch</i> , <i>-x</i> , <i>-o</i> , etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • class • brush • hero 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • classes • brushes • heroes
	Nouns ending with <i>-y</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baby • lady • story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • babies • ladies • stories
Irregular plurals	Nouns ending with <i>-f</i> , <i>-fe</i> (except <i>dwarf</i> – <i>dwarfs</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calf • thief • wife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calves • thieves • wives
	Nouns that change vowels in the plural form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • man • goose • foot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • men • geese • feet
	Nouns that change their form completely in the plural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child • ox • mouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children • oxen • mice
	Nouns that remain the same in the singular and plural forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sheep • deer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sheep • deer
	Nouns that have only plural forms		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scissors • binoculars • glasses
	Nouns that have only singular forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • news • mathematics • measles 	



Note

For some nouns that end in *-o*, we add only *-s*.

- piano – pianos
- photo – photos
- gecko – geckos

For some nouns that end in *-o*, we add *-es*.

- potato – potatoes
- tomato – tomatoes
- hero – heroes
- echo – echoes

For some nouns that end in *-f* or *-fe*, we add only *-s*.

- chief – chiefs
- roof – roofs
- safe – safes

C Write the plural forms of these nouns.

1. branch branches
2. splash
3. potato
4. memento
5. city
6. dwarf
7. shorts
8. knife
9. wolf
10. pony
11. scissors
12. fox
13. hoof
14. army

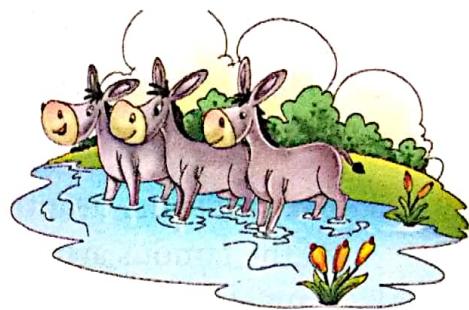


D Choose the correct words from the brackets to complete these sentences.

1. Four oxen (**oxes/oxen**) are grazing on that field.
2. These (**shelfs/shelves**) in the kitchen need to be cleaned.
3. We took many (**photos/photoes**) on our vacation.



4. Swathi wears her (pyjama/pyjamas) before going to bed at night.
5. Manoj bought a box of (cherries/cherrys) from the market.
6. Ayesha could not take the final exam as she had (measle/measles).
7. The (donkeys/donkies) were crossing the river.
8. My grandmother tells me many interesting (storys/stories).



E Tick (✓) the sentence with the correct forms of the nouns.

1. There are many calves in the field.
There are many calfs in the field.
2. These scissor are blunt and do not cut well.
These scissors are blunt and do not cut well.
3. There are many horses in the farm.
There are many horse in the farm.
4. The leafs of these trees turn orange in autumn.
The leaves of these trees turn orange in autumn.
5. The roof of the building leaks during the rainy season.
The rooves of the building leaks during the rainy season.
6. She saw two buffalos standing near the gate.
She saw two buffaloes standing near the gate.



F Complete these sentences with the singular or plural forms of the nouns in brackets.

1. We have music class (class) for an (hour) every day.
2. Delhi and Mumbai are two big (city) in India.
3. We saw some beautiful (sketch) of the famous artist.
4. Neeraj was a tall thin boy who wore (glass).
5. The men hung their (trouser) on a hook.
6. These (photo) were taken in the (studio).
7. The (road) was crowded and the (vehicle) were moving at a slow pace.



G Complete this passage with the singular or plural forms of the words given in brackets.

Ali was going to the supermarket. He asked his sister Noor if she wanted him to get anything from the supermarket. "Yes, I do," said Noor, "Please get me a box of matches (match). I need them for a science project." "Anything else?" asked Ali. He knew his sister was in the habit of remembering things only after he left.

"Oh, yes," continued Noor, "Now that you ask me, I do need some (candle) and a bar of (soap), two (box) of pencils and a dozen (handkerchief). Some (mango) and (strawberry) would be nice, too. Well, that's all for today."



"Are you sure, Noor?" "Yes, I am...but wait. I've just remembered. Could you also get me some (pastry), two (loaf) of bread and a dozen (egg) as well."

"Yes, sure," said Ali as he left home with a smile.

DIY Exercise

Match the nouns with the correct endings to make them plural.
Then, write them in the spaces provided.

song

life

ferry

sandwich

pathway

-s

-es

-ies

-ves

wash

lorry

volcano

scarf

factory

1.
3.
5.
7.
9.

2.
4.
6.
8.
10.

2

Abstract and Collective Nouns



Abstract Nouns

An **abstract noun** is the name of a quality, action or state.

- **kindness** → quality
- **laughter** → action
- **childhood** → state



An abstract noun stands for something that cannot be seen, touched or smelt. It does not exist physically in the world around us. Abstract nouns are formed from adjectives, verbs and common nouns.

Here is a table with more examples of abstract nouns.

Abstract nouns formed from adjectives	Adjectives	Abstract nouns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brave • good • wise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bravery • goodness • wisdom
Abstract nouns formed from verbs	Verbs	Abstract nouns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thieve • judge • move 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • theft • judgement • movement
Abstract nouns formed from common nouns	Common nouns	Abstract nouns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boy • slave • friend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boyhood • slavery • friendship

A Underline the abstract nouns in these sentences.

1. Everyone appreciated Amit for his bravery.
2. Mother Teresa was known for her kindness.
3. Wisdom comes with age.
4. Hatred is not a good quality.
5. There was a theft in my neighbour's house yesterday.
6. During childhood, Seema was a very naughty girl.
7. His strength was admired by everyone.



B Circle all the abstract nouns in this passage.

All of us have our heroes, real or imaginary of the past or the present. We admire them because they are braver, stronger and cleverer than we are or can ever hope to be. But that is not the only reason for our admiration. Heroes are people who use their strength, courage and intelligence on the side of justice. It is not the bow and arrow, the club or bulging muscles that make a hero. It is goodness, love of justice and courage to do right that makes a hero.

C Write whether these abstract nouns have been formed from adjectives (A), verbs (V) or common nouns (C).

- | | | |
|--------------|---|--------|
| 1. happiness | - | A..... |
| 2. boyhood | - | |
| 3. truth | - | |
| 4. growth | - | |
| 5. wealth | - | |
| 6. amusement | - | |
| 7. sickness | - | |
| 8. pleasure | - | |
| 9. freedom | - | |
| 10. poverty | - | |





Collective Nouns

A **collective noun** is a name for a group or collection of people or things taken together.

- crowd
- team
- army
- fleet
- family
- nation
- herd
- parliament
- a **pride** of lions
- a **swarm** of bees
- a **fleet** of ships



When a collective noun stands for a group as a whole, it takes a singular verb. When we refer to individual members of the group, then it takes a plural verb.

- Our government **is** fighting polio. (refers to government as a whole)
- The group **was** still waiting. (refers to group as a whole)
- The audience **are** restless. (refers to individual members in the audience)
- The crowd **were** unruly. (refers to individual members in the crowd)

Here are some more examples of collective nouns with verbs in the singular and plural forms.

- The team **was** practising hard. (team as a whole)
- The team **were** confident of victory. (each member of the team)
- The family **has** a large house. (family as a whole)
- The family **have** settled their quarrel. (the members of the family)
- The city police **is** a strong force. (police as an entire force)
- The police **are** planning a cultural show. (members of the police force)

D Match the phrases in column A with the correct collective nouns in column B. Then, write the collective nouns in column A to complete the phrases.

A	B
1. a clutch of eggs	a. pack
2. a of trees	b. shoal
3. a of hen	c. clutch
4. a of dancers	d. gang
5. a of wolves	e. team
6. a of robbers	f. grove
7. a of whales	g. troupe
8. a of players	h. brood

E Choose the correct collective nouns from the box to complete these sentences.

class bundle crowd jury team bunch

- I saw a large crowd outside the Mayor's office in the morning.
- My favourite football is playing on Sunday.
- Our has twenty-five students.
- The declared Shyam innocent.
- I gave my mother a of roses for her birthday.
- I found a of sticks on the pavement.



F Choose the correct form of the verbs given in brackets to complete these sentences.

- A huge swarm of locusts has (**has/have**) destroyed the crops.
- The crowd (**has/have**) dispersed now.
- The pack of dogs (**was/were**) running off in different directions.

4. Our staff (meet/meets) on Tuesday mornings to discuss various issues.
5. The family next door (is/are) quite friendly.
6. The football team (practise/practises) together every evening.
7. The cattle (are/is) grazing in the field.
8. The French team (was/were) defeated in the finals.



G Complete this story with suitable collective nouns from the box.



block	stack	pile	book
bunch	flight	bundle	sheaf

Grandmother was in trouble. She had lost her reading glasses and was looking for them. She searched high and low. She looked through a stack of old newspapers, but could not find her glasses. She overturned a chest of drawers, but all that she found was a of keys and a of milk coupons. She put her hands into a of dirty clothes kept for washing, but still no glasses. She was getting worried. There was a whole of letters for her to read through that morning and she had already lost valuable time looking for her glasses. She said to herself, "Maybe, the glasses have gone into the rubbish bin along with the waste paper I threw out this morning."

Grandmother lived in an apartment on the first floor of a of flats. She ran down a of stairs and looked carefully through the of rubbish in the bin, but did not find anything.

Tired and panting, she climbed up to her flat and sat down on the sofa. Her ten-year-old granddaughter, Rita, who had been watching all this, asked her what the matter was.

"I can't find my glasses though I have looked for them everywhere," said Grandmother sadly.

"I know where they are," said Rita. "You left them at the optician's yesterday and asked them to change the lenses."

DIY Exercise

Work in groups of four or five. Each group will have one minute to come up with a list of abstract nouns and collective nouns. When the time is up, discuss the list of nouns written down by all the groups. The group with the most number of correct nouns wins.

3

Countable and Uncountable Nouns



Countable and Uncountable Nouns

We already know what countable nouns and uncountable nouns are.

Countable nouns are things which we can count. They can be singular or plural.

- one book → two books

Collective nouns such as *team*, *herd*, *crowd* are also countable nouns.

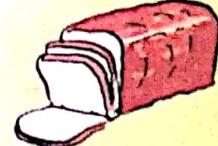
Countable nouns take the articles *a*, *an*, *the* and words such as *many*, *a few*, *a large number of* before them.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| • a dog | • an umbrella | • the picture |
| • many potatoes | • a few girls | |
| • a large number of companies | | |



Uncountable nouns name things which cannot be counted. They are always singular and have no plural forms.

- | | | |
|--------|----------|---------|
| • tea | • juice | • rice |
| • soup | • cheese | • bread |



We do not use *a* or *an* before uncountable nouns. They take *some*, *much*, *a little*, *a large amount of* before them.

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| • much water | • some milk |
| • a little sugar | • a large amount of butter |



Note

Both countable and uncountable nouns take *some*, *a lot of* and *any* before them.

- some books, some sugar, a lot of students, a lot of money, any seat, any sugar

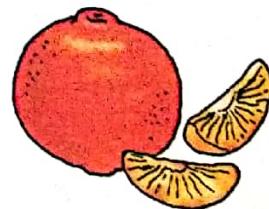
A Write whether the highlighted nouns are countable (C) or uncountable (UC).

1. John doesn't like **coffee**. UC
2. **Scientists** say there is a threat of pollution.
3. The **children** are playing in the terrace.
4. There are a lot of **windows** in our classroom.
5. We need some **glue** to fix this toy.
6. My uncle drinks two big **glasses** of water every morning.
7. The **waiters** in this restaurant are friendly.
8. They served us **bread** and **cheese** for breakfast.



B Use a, an or some with these nouns. Then, write C for countable or UC for uncountable.

1. some money UC
2. ponds
3. cup of tea
4. sugar
5. bar of chocolate
6. ice cream
7. rice
8. glass of water
9. coffee
10. cake
11. eggs
12. orange
13. bunch of grapes



14. coins

15. salt

C Choose the correct words to complete these sentences.

1. There wasn't much (much/many) traffic on the highway.

2. We haven't got (some/any) strawberries at the moment.

3. There are just (a little/a few) chocolates in the box.

4. I'd like (some/much) juice, please!

5. In summer, we must drink (much/a lot of) water.

6. I saw (some/any) nice postcards in that shop.

7. I don't receive (much/many) letters nowadays.

8. There were (a lot of/a large amount of) people at the concert.



Use of *the* and Quantifying Uncountable Nouns

We use *the* before uncountable nouns only when it is clear which things are being referred to. We do not use *the* before uncountable nouns when we are talking in general.

- **The** milk in the jug is very hot.
- Milk is good for health.



If we want to talk about the quantity of uncountable nouns, we use *a/an* + countable noun + *of* + uncountable noun.

- a plate of rice
- a grain of sand
- a spoon of sugar
- a glass of water
- a bottle of juice



D Use the words in Box A both as countable and uncountable nouns to complete these sentence-pairs. The words in Box B will help you make the nouns in Box A countable.

Box A

salt water paper sunshine ice

Box B

sheet ray cube glass pinch

1. It's so cold, the water has turned into ice
- Can I have a cube of ice , please? The water is not cold enough.
2. Give me , please. I want to write a note.
These toy boats are made of
3. This dish has no in it.
Would you like to add some?
Add just to taste.
4. He was so thirsty, he gulped down the
Can I have , please? I feel so hot and tired.
5. It makes me so happy to see
after so many days of rainy, cloudy mornings.
..... fell on her sleeping face.



How many and How much

We use *how many* with countable nouns to form questions.

- **How many** oranges are there in the basket?
- **How many** children are there in the playground?

We use *how much* with uncountable nouns to form questions.

- **How much** milk do we have in the fridge?
- **How much** oil do we need to add?



(E) Rearrange these words to form questions using how much or how many.

1. does / sisters / have / how many / she

How many sisters does she have?

2. your friend / languages / does / how many / speak

.....

3. Kumar / money / how much / borrow / from you / did

.....

4. solve / crosswords / he / how many / did / correctly

.....

5. is / in / the deserts / sand / how much

.....

6. on / information / is / the Internet / how much / there

.....

7. the world / how many / there / are / in / countries

.....



(F) Complete the sentences in column B with a few or a little.

Then, match the questions in column A with the answers in column B.

A

1. How much money do you have with you?
2. Have you made any friends in your class yet?
3. Did you see many films during the vacation?
4. Do you have any books on dinosaurs?
5. Is there any juice left in the fridge?
6. How about some more ice cream, Rita?

B

- a. Yes, I have Would you like to borrow them?
- b. Well, maybe I've already had two helpings.
- c. Just a little There's not enough to buy the pens.
- d. Yes, there is left. We must buy another bottle today.
- e. No, just I was busy with other things.
- f. Just I am still getting used to everyone.

G Write questions using how much or how many with these nouns.

1. (eggs) How many eggs do you have?
2. (jam)
3. (people)
4. (flour)
5. (players)
6. (teams)
7. (oil)



H Circle the countable nouns and underline the uncountable nouns in this story.

A Minister of the Government was passing through the country on his way to the capital. Being a man of wealth and pride, he wanted to have lunch in a five-star hotel—the usual five course affair, ending with coffee. There were several hotels on the way, but none met the required standard. The sun was hot, the air humid, and the Minister was growing hungry. When the heat and the hunger became too much, he told his driver to stop at the next hotel, whatever it may be.

The next hotel they passed was the Taj Mahal Inn which had a roof made of tin, walls of termite-eaten wood and windows without glass. However, the Minister went in and sat down at the table nearest the door. Inside, the place was quite clean and the waiters were very efficient, but the Minister who was in a bad temper found fault with everything—the colour of the plates, the shape of the water-jug, the rickety furniture and everything else.



When the food was served, the Minister thumped the table and shouted, “Waiter! There are some flies in my dal. I do not like this.”

At this the waiter, who had done his best to be helpful and polite, said with a quiet smile, “Well, sir, just eat the ones you like and leave the rest.”

DIY Exercise

Find the ten nouns in this grid. Can you count them or not?

Discuss it with a friend.

C	H	E	E	S	E	O	E	T	M
H	M	X	T	S	U	Q	R	Z	O
I	R	M	M	U	S	I	C	T	N
L	T	Y	R	S	N	V	X	C	K
D	R	U	P	W	S	M	O	K	E
X	C	R	G	J	L	O	P	B	Y
Q	W	H	T	G	F	J	H	I	L
P	H	O	T	O	G	R	A	P	H
X	K	U	I	M	H	K	R	L	T
B	V	S	O	U	P	L	U	O	M
O	F	E	C	U	R	T	X	C	H
X	Q	N	T	R	A	F	F	I	C

