

5118008 English for Software Developer

Quantifiers

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What is Quantifier

- A quantifier is an adjective (or adjective phrase) that describes quantities or amounts of a given noun or pronoun

For use with uncountable nouns	For use with both types of nouns	For use with countable nouns
A little, little A bit of A great deal of A large amount of Much	No, none Some (of) Any A lot Lots of Plenty of Enough	A few, few A number of Numerous Several Many (numbers)*

Countable vs. Uncountable

- Countable noun: items that can be counted
- Uncountable noun: items impossible to count
 - including substances, liquids, abstract ideas, and degree
 - called mass noun
- A noun may be countable or uncountable depending on the context
 - Ex. time
 - Did you have a good time at the party?
 - I don't have time to do my hair.
 - Ex. juice
 - There is juice on the table.
 - There are some juices on the table.

Quantifiers with Both Countable and Uncountable

- The following quantifiers can be used with countable or uncountable nouns:
 - all
 - most
 - a lot of (lots of)
 - plenty of
 - tons of
 - some
 - any
 - enough
 - more
 - less

Some vs. Any

- Quantifier “any” is used in negative or interrogative sentences
 - Ex. Do you have any problems?
 - Ex. I didn’t see any friends.
 - Ex. We saw some lions at the zoo, but we didn’t see any tigers.
- In affirmative sentence, “any” means “no matter which”
 - Ex. You can take any book you like.
- Basically, “Some” is used in affirmative sentence to modify a plural noun.
- Nonetheless, “some” can be used for offers and requests
 - Ex. Would you like some tea?
 - Ex. I want some apples, please.
- With a singular noun, “some” emphasize that the speaker does not know which person (or thing) that is.
 - Ex. Some man phoned but didn’t leave his number.

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar/english-grammar-reference/quantifiers>
<https://multimedia-english.com/grammar/some-any-no-special-cases-6>

All

- “All” means the complete number of something.
- “All” can be used before article, possessives, demonstrative and numbers
 - Ex. Someone has taken all my books.
 - Ex. I wrote down the titles of all the stolen books.
 - Ex. I need to buy all these books again.
 - Ex. It costs me more than 100 USD to buy all ten books.
- When the determiner is a pronoun, “all of” is used instead of “all”
 - Ex. All of you were late to class.
 - c.f. “All” can be used as pronoun meaning “everyone” or “everything” when it combines with other pronouns
 - Ex. All you need is love

Quantifiers with Countable Nouns

- The following quantifiers can be used only with countable nouns:
 - each
 - either (neither)
 - both
 - few (a few, fewer)
 - a couple of
 - several
 - many
 - hundreds of (thousands of)

Few vs. A Few

- Quantifier “a few” indicates that the speaker has a positive feeling toward the quantity (positive connotation), whereas “few” negative
- Example
 - The doctor said that, even this medicine does not work, there remain a few other medicines that he can try out.
 - The doctor said that we would better continue the current treatment, since there are only few medicines left.

Members of Group

- Put a quantifier directly to the noun when it describes the members of the group in general
 - Ex. Most children like chocolate
 - Ex. Few snakes are dangerous
- Use “of the” when a specific group is concerned
 - Ex. Most of the children in the school play football.
 - Ex. Few of the snakes in this zoo are dangerous.

Every vs. Each

- “Each” is to refer to individual things in a group
- “Every” is to refer to a group of multiple things
 - refers to the collective whole, not the individuals
 - “all” can be used instead
- Example
 - Each one presents his/her own idea for the new project.
 - Every student passes the graduation tests.
 - We have a homework every Friday class. Each homework concerns a different chapter of the textbook.

Quantifiers with Uncountable Nouns

- The following quantifiers can be used only with uncountable nouns:
 - little (a little)
 - a bit of
 - much
 - a large amount of
 - a good (great) deal of <abstract noun>
 - e.g. time, money, trouble

Less, Fewer, More, Greater, Much

- fewer / more + countable
- less / greater + uncountable
 - Ex. If fewer people used disposable bottles, there will be less plastic in landfills
- “much” refers to the matter of quantity, while “more” refers to the matter of quantity in comparison
 - Ex. I saw many bigger elephants vs. I saw much bigger elephants.
- “larger” and “bigger” modifies the quantity of a countable noun