**Countable and uncountable nouns**

Do you know how to use *a*, *some*, *any*, *much* and *many*?

Look at these examples to see how to use countable and uncountable nouns in a sentence.

I'm making a cup of tea.There's some money on the table.Have we got any bread?How many chairs do we need?How much milk have we got?

Try this exercise to test your grammar.

EXERCISE Complete the sentences with one word.

1. How \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  people are coming?

2. We've got \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ chicken but there isn't \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rice.

3. How \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  water do you think we need?

4. There's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  cat in the garden.

5. I've bought  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  new shoes.

6. Do you have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  advice for me?

7. We have a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of chairs but we don't have  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  tables.

8. There isn't  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  toothpaste.

GRAMMAR EXPLANATION   
Nouns can be countable or uncountable.   
Countable nouns can be counted, e.g. an apple, two apples, three apples, etc. Uncountable nouns cannot be counted, e.g. air, rice, water, etc.   
When you learn a new noun, you should check if it is countable or uncountable and note how it is used in a sentence.

### Countable nouns

For positive sentences we can use a/anfor singular nouns or some for plurals.

There's ***a*** man at the door.I have ***some***friends in New York.

For negatives we can use a/anfor singular nouns or any for plurals.

I don't have ***a***dog.There aren't ***any***seats.

### Uncountable nouns

Here are some examples of uncountable nouns:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| bread | rice | coffee | information |
| money | advice | luggage | furniture |

We use some with uncountable nouns in positive sentences and any with negatives.

There's ***some***milk in the fridge.There isn't ***any***coffee.

### Questions

In questions we use a/an, any or how many with countable nouns.

Is there ***an***email address to write to?Are there ***any***chairs?***How many*** chairs are there?

And we use any or how much with uncountable nouns.

Is there ***any***sugar?***How much*** orange juice is there?

But when we are offering something or asking for something, we normally use some.

Do you want ***some***chocolate?Can we have ***some*** more chairs, please?

We also use some in a question when we think the answer will be 'yes'.

Have you got ***some***new glasses?

### Other expressions of quantity

A lot of (or lots of) can be used with both countable and uncountable nouns.

There are ***lots of*** apples on the trees.There is ***a lot of*** snow on the road.

Notice that we don't usually use many or much in positive sentences. We use a lot of instead.

They have ***a lot of*** money.

However, in negative sentences we use not many with countable nouns and not much with uncountable nouns.

There are a lot of carrots but there are***n't many*** potatoes.There's lots of juice but there is***n't much*** water.

Let us practice!  
Complete the sentences with one word.

1. We didn't have  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  problems.

2. Do you want  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  chocolate?

3. How \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people have sent you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  email?

4. I need \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  information about train times.

5. We've got a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  of luggage.

6. There isn't \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  space in the car.

7. I've bought \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ new shoes but I didn't get \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  shirt.

8. There's never \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  petrol after Sam uses the car!

# Countable and uncountable nouns 2

Do you know how to use a few, few, very little and a bit of?

Look at these examples to see how these quantifiers are used with countable and uncountable nouns.

I have ***a few*** friends, so I'm not lonely.She has ***few***friends, so she's quite lonely.We've got ***a bit of*** time before our train. Shall we get a (cup of) coffee?We've got ***very little*** time before our train. Hurry up!

Try this exercise to test your grammar.

EXERCISE Choose the correct option.

I have \_\_\_\_\_ questions.

Parte superior do formulário

a few

a bit of

Parte inferior do formulário

Do you want \_\_\_\_\_ chocolate?

Parte superior do formulário

a few

a bit of

Parte inferior do formulário

You made \_\_\_\_\_ mistakes. Well done!

Parte superior do formulário

a few

few

Parte inferior do formulário

I have \_\_\_\_\_ money.

Parte superior do formulário

few

very little

Parte inferior do formulário

\_\_\_\_\_ students understand this.

Parte superior do formulário

Few

Very little

Parte inferior do formulário

They have \_\_\_\_\_ rain in summer.

Parte superior do formulário

few

very little

Parte inferior do formulário

It's not easy. You will need \_\_\_\_\_ help.

Parte superior do formulário

a bit of

very little

Parte inferior do formulário

Is it OK if I bring \_\_\_\_\_ friends?

Parte superior do formulário

a few

few

## Grammar explanation

A few and a bit of or a little mean some. Often we feel this amount is enough or more than we expected. We use a few with plural nouns and a bit of or a little with uncountable nouns.

I have ***a few*** ideas.I've brought ***a few*** friends.There's ***a bit of*** milk left.It needs***a little*** more work.

We use few and very little to show that we are talking about a small amount. Often we feel this amount is not enough or less than we expected. Few is for countable nouns and very little is for uncountable nouns.

***Few***people came to the meeting.There are ***few*** places where you can still see these birds.We have ***very little*** time.I have ***very little*** money.

Note that you can use little without very, but it is less common and sounds quite formal.

She had ***little***water.

Let us practice!  
We have \_\_\_\_\_ ideas.

Parte superior do formulário

a few

a bit of

Parte inferior do formulário

There is \_\_\_\_\_ space in this room.

Parte superior do formulário

few

very little

Parte inferior do formulário

Can you give that plant \_\_\_\_\_ water?

Parte superior do formulário

a few

a bit of

Parte inferior do formulário

\_\_\_\_\_ houses have central heating here.

Parte superior do formulário

Few

Very little

Parte inferior do formulário

The doctor told me to rest for \_\_\_\_\_ days.

Parte superior do formulário

few

a few

Parte inferior do formulário

I have \_\_\_\_\_ information about this.

Parte superior do formulário

few

very little

Parte inferior do formulário

It's a difficult situation and \_\_\_\_\_ countries want to help.

Parte superior do formulário

few

very little

Parte inferior do formulário

I'll come later. I need to do \_\_\_\_\_ work first.

Parte superior do formulário

a few

a bit of

Parte inferior do formulário