



Countable and Uncountable Nouns PDF

Another category of nouns relates to their “countability.” There are unique terms associated with this state of countability or uncountability.

Uncountable Nouns:

Uncountable nouns come in a state or quantity that are not possible to count. For instance, a liquid like water is uncountable, just like things that act like liquids (air or sand, for example). For this reason, they are always considered to be singular. These uncountable nouns can be used with some, any, a little, a lot, and much.

For example:

- A good ruler can measure any distance.
↳ As this example shows, “distance” is an uncountable noun.
- Does this pasta dish have any meat in it?
↳ “Meat” refers to an uncountable, unknown, or irrelevant amount. If someone is vegetarian, for example, it matters only whether or not there is meat in a food dish.
- My mother used to do a lot of housework before I started helping her.
↳ This example refers to an unspecified, unquantifiable amount of housework, so “housework” is an uncountable noun and is paired with “a lot.”

As you may have noted from the above examples, uncountable nouns can only be used in singular. They cannot be used with a number, since we don't count them. For instance, it is possible to say, "I have a lot of money." However, we cannot say, "I have 5000 money."

Here are a few other examples of how this works for uncountable nouns:

- She drinks a lot of juice. (Not: She drinks 6 juice.)
- There was not much air in the tire. (Not: There was not 100 air in the tire.)

Now, you can add a measurement to these words to count them. But to do this, you would need to specify the currency, weigh, vessel, or something similar. For example, you could say:

- I have 5000 Euros.
- She drinks 6 glasses of juice.
- There was 10 PSI air in the tire.

Countable Nouns:

Countable nouns have both a singular and a plural form. In plural, these nouns can be used with a specific number, that is, they can be counted. Nouns are considered countable even if the potential number might be extraordinarily high (for example, counting all the stars in the universe). These nouns can be used with a/an, the, some, any, a few, and many.

For example:

- Here is the sandwich.

↳ In this case, we see that sandwich is countable and singular (there is only one).

- Here are some sandwiches.

↳ Here, sandwiches are countable and plural, even if we don't know exactly how many sandwiches there are.

- I have a friend. You have 20 friends.

↳ There is one friend in the first sentence, and 20 in the second.

- She ate an apple. They ate three apples.

↳ There is one apple in the first sentence, and 3 in the second.

