

## Quantifiers

We use quantifiers with nouns to talk about quantity. The choice of quantifier depends on:

- if the noun is countable or uncountable.
- if we are talking about small or large quantities.

Some nouns are countable. This means they can become plural, for example, *computer, bag, box, magazine*. Other nouns are uncountable. This means they cannot normally become plural, for example, *trash, plastic, paper, metal*.

Quantity	Countable	Uncountable
large quantity	a lot of / lots of	a lot of / lots of
neutral quantity (not large or small)	some	some
small quantity	not many	not much
small quantity	a few	a little
no quantity (zero)	not any	not any

## Grammar quantifiers

2 Look at the nouns (1–6). Decide if you can use *a*, *an*, or *some*.

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1 _____ banana | 4 _____ egg    |
| 2 _____ juice  | 5 _____ milk   |
| 3 _____ box    | 6 _____ carton |

### ► SPELL CHECK plural countable nouns

- Add *-s* to most countable nouns: *egg* → *eggs*
- Add *-es* to nouns ending in *-ch*, *-s*, *-ss*, *-sh*, and *-x*: *sandwich* → *sandwiches*
- Change nouns ending in *-y* (after a consonant) to *-i* and add *-es*: *city* → *cities*
- Don't change the *-y* to *-i* after a vowel: *key* → *keys*
- Some nouns are irregular: *man* → *men*

3 Look at the spell check box. Then write the plural form of these countable nouns. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- |              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| 1 jar        | _____ |
| 2 bus        | _____ |
| 3 country    | _____ |
| 4 holiday    | _____ |
| 5 woman      | _____ |
| 6 can        | _____ |
| 7 box        | _____ |
| 8 child      | _____ |
| 9 phone      | _____ |
| 10 class     | _____ |
| 11 story     | _____ |
| 12 cartridge | _____ |

We use *a lot of* or *lots of* with countable and uncountable nouns to talk about large quantities.

*There was a lot of trash on the streets after the party.*  
*We have lots of great shops in my neighborhood.*

We use *some* with both countable and uncountable nouns. It does not refer to a specific amount—we use it to talk about quantities that are not large and are not small.

*I found some really useful books in the library.*  
 (= not a lot)

In more formal English, we use *many* + plural noun to talk about large quantities.

*There are many interesting places to visit in the city.*

We also use *many* and *much* in questions.

*Are there many good shops where you live?*  
*Do you have much free time?*

We don't normally use *many* and *much* in affirmative sentences in spoken English. We use *a lot of* or *lots of* instead.

We use *not much* and *not many* to talk about small quantities. We use *not much* with uncountable nouns and *not many* with plural countable nouns.

*There weren't many people at the party.*  
*They don't have much money.*

Note that *not* always goes with the verb in the sentence.

4 Complete the pairs of sentences with the quantifiers.

- some / any
  - There are \_\_\_\_\_ cakes on the table.
  - There isn't \_\_\_\_\_ sugar.
- any / many
  - I don't have \_\_\_\_\_ eggs, but I can give you one.
  - I don't have \_\_\_\_\_ eggs. We'll have to buy some.
- a lot of / much
  - We have \_\_\_\_\_ old aluminum foil that we should recycle.
  - We don't use \_\_\_\_\_ aluminum foil because plastic wrap is better.
- a few / a little
  - There are \_\_\_\_\_ ink cartridges in that box.
  - There's only \_\_\_\_\_ ink in this pen.
- a few / many
  - I don't get \_\_\_\_\_ days off for vacation.
  - I have \_\_\_\_\_ days every year for vacation.
- a little / much
  - I only get \_\_\_\_\_ exercise at the gym each week.
  - Do you get \_\_\_\_\_ exercise?