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*

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.

Grammar quantifiers

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

1 _____ banana
2 _____ juice
3 _____ box
4 _____ egg
5 _____ milk
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 _____

4 Complete the pairs of sentences with the quantifiers.

1 some / any
   a There are _____ cakes on the table.
   b There isn't _____ sugar.

2 any / many
   a I don't have _____ eggs, but I can give you one.
   b I don't have _____ eggs. We'll have to buy some.

3 a lot of / much
   a We have _____ old aluminum foil that we should recycle.
   b We don't use _____ aluminum foil because plastic wrap is better.

4 a few / a little
   a There are _____ ink cartridges in that box.
   b There's only _____ ink in this pen.

5 a few / many
   a I don't get _____ days off for vacation.
   b I have _____ days every year for vacation.

6 a little / much
   a I only get _____ exercise at the gym each week.
   b Do you get _____ exercise?

LIVEWORKSHEETS