

# A little and a few

Using (a) *little* and (a) *few* when talking about things

In this unit you learn about words used to talk about quantity.

**Maggie** We're cooking tonight. Let's see how much food we've got.

**Daniel** OK. We've got **plenty of** rice and **lots of** tomatoes. We've also got **several** onions.

**Maggie** Great! How about cheese?

**Daniel** Well, we've only got **a little** and there are only **only a couple of** eggs. I think we need three or four. And there are **hardly any** mushrooms.

**Maggie** OK so we need to buy eggs, cheese and **a few** mushrooms.

The table below shows you which phrases are used to show **a lot** or **not much/many**.

| A lot     | Not much/many    |
|-----------|------------------|
| a lot of  | a little         |
| plenty of | very little      |
| lots of   | only a couple of |
| several   | hardly any       |
|           | a few            |

- You use **a little / little** before uncountable nouns and **a few / few** before countable nouns:

*There's only **a little** food in the fridge.*

*I bought **a few** books yesterday.*

- These sentences show the difference between **few**, **a few**, **little** and **a little**:

*I have **few** friends. = I don't have many friends.*

*I have **a few** DVDs. = I have some DVDs.*

*There was **very little** food left at the end of the party. = There wasn't much food left.*

*There was **a little** food left at the end of the party. = There was some food left.*

- You can only use **several** and **a couple of** before countable nouns:

*There are **a couple of** people waiting for you.*

*I've been to **several** football matches this year.*

- You can use these phrases as short answers to questions. You do not use **of** in short answers:

A: How much homework have you got?

B: **Hardly any!**

A: Have you got any money?

B: **A little.**

A: Have you seen any of his films?

B: **A couple.**

### Remember!

A lot of, lots of, plenty of and hardly any can be used with countable and uncountable nouns.

We've got **lots of** milk/bananas.

She eats **hardly any** fruit/vegetables.

## Exercise 1

Put the correct word or phrase in each gap.

lot | little | plenty | hardly | a few | couple

Hi Nick

Nice to get your message. I'm afraid Anna's party didn't go so well. She invited

<sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ of people but only <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ came. A <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ of neighbours joined us (Paul and Sophie – I think you know them?) but <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ any of the people Anna invited from work came. I think she was quite upset. There was a <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ of food left at the end of the evening. Very <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ was eaten. It was a shame.

Perhaps you could call Anna and have a chat?

Love

Alessandra

## Exercise 2

Are the bold words correct or incorrect in the sentences, as shown?

- There's only **a few** ☒ pasta left.
- We're only here for **a few** ☒ days.
- Are there any cafés near here? Yes, **a little** ☐.
- She has **lot of** ☐ friends.
- How many people were there? **Several** ☐ – just one or two.
- How much milk is there? **Plenty**. ☐

### Exercise 3

Complete the sentences by writing one word in each gap.

much | several | plenty | a little | hardly | couple

- 1 You're too late for the cake – I'm afraid there isn't \_\_\_\_\_ left.
- 2 I've got \_\_\_\_\_ of books for my holiday now.
- 3 I know a \_\_\_\_\_ of the teachers at Charlotte's school.
- 4 Jude Law is in \_\_\_\_\_ films that I hate.
- 5 There's \_\_\_\_\_ any coffee in the cupboard.
- 6 There's not much pizza left and only \_\_\_\_\_ salad.

### Exercise 4

Match the sentence halves.

- |                         |                                 |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 I have a couple of    | a few friends.                  |
| 2 The poor guy had very | b of tickets left for the show. |
| 3 I have hardly         | c of cake left, if you want it. |
| 4 There are plenty      | d cheese in the fridge.         |
| 5 There isn't much      | e any money left.               |
| 6 There's a bit         | f really good friends in Paris. |

### Exercise 5

Choose the correct word, as shown.

- 1 A: There were plenty of people there, weren't there? B: Yes, **a couple** (lots)
- 2 A: There wasn't much snow last year, was there? B: No, very **little** / few.
- 3 A: There aren't many trees here, are there? B: No, very **little** / few.
- 4 A: Did Diana get many presents for her birthday? B: Yes, **a few** / few.
- 5 A: Is there any coffee left? B: Only **a little** / a few, I'm afraid.
- 6 A: How many different kinds of cake can you make? B: **Several** / A little.

### Exercise 6

Decide if the pairs of sentences have the same meaning, as shown.

- 1 A There is little food. ☒  
B There is not much food.
- 2 A There is plenty of food. ☐  
B There is some food but not a lot.
- 3 A Dave has a few sweets in his pocket. ☐  
B There are no sweets in Dave's pocket.
- 4 A She has few friends. ☐  
B She hasn't got many friends.
- 5 A I have a few ideas for my essay. ☐  
B I have some ideas for my essay.
- 6 A We had little hope that we could win. ☐  
B We knew that we could win.

# Possessive pronouns

Using pronouns to show who things belong to

**mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs; one/ones; no/none**

In this unit you learn to use pronouns to talk about who things belong to. You also learn about using **one, ones, no** and **none**.

You use possessive pronouns (**mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs**) when you talk about who things belong to.

*It's not my DVD. It's **his**.*

*See that car over there. It's **ours**.*

*Give me back that book. It's **mine**!*

You can also use **of** before a possessive pronoun.

*I know Fiona very well. She's a very good friend **of mine**.*

*Is it true that our new teacher is a neighbour **of yours**?*

| Subject pronoun | Possessive pronoun |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| I               | mine               |
| you             | yours              |
| he              | his                |
| she             | hers               |
| we              | ours               |
| they            | theirs             |

You use **one** and **ones** as pronouns for things.

*A: I've got a few DVDs here. What do you want to watch?*

*B: Well, this **one** is really funny. Let's watch that.*

*A: These trainers all look the same. Which **ones** are yours?*

*B: The **ones** with the green stripes.*

You can use **no** before a singular or a plural noun.

*There were **no** people at the tennis courts yesterday.*

*There was **no** food left at the end of the party.*

**None (of)** is always followed by a plural verb.

***None of** my friends are going to the concert next week.*

*I need to go shopping. **None of** my clothes fit me.*



## Exercise 1

Match the sentence halves.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 Rebecca is a cousin of mine. She's             | a next to each other in Maths and English.   |
| 2 Ryan was a pupil of my husband's. He was in    | b together at the hospital.                  |
| 3 Marie was a colleague of Daniel's. They worked | c each other for years.                      |
| 4 Jane is a neighbour of Peter's. She has        | d the oldest daughter of my mother's sister. |
| 5 Louise is a classmate of Ella's. They sit      | e a flat in the same building.               |
| 6 Karen is an old friend of mine. We've known    | f his class at Park School.                  |

## Exercise 2

Complete the sentences by writing one word in each gap.

ours | mine | theirs | yours | hers | his

- 1 I didn't have my mobile with me, so Hans lent me \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 You look cold. If you haven't got a jacket, use \_\_\_\_\_ – I'm not cold.
- 3 We don't need to buy a tent. Angie and Julian aren't using \_\_\_\_\_, so they said we can borrow it.
- 4 We have the same pens, don't we? Is this mine or \_\_\_\_\_?
- 5 I thought this book was mine but my sister said it was \_\_\_\_\_. She's right – it's got her name in it!
- 6 We bought that ball last summer, don't you remember? It's definitely \_\_\_\_\_.

## Exercise 3

Match the two parts.

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| 1 It's Tom's book.                          | a It's hers.      |
| 2 It's definitely Maria's mobile.           | b They're yours.  |
| 3 Those tennis rackets belong to us.        | c It's his.       |
| 4 That umbrella belongs to me.              | d They're ours.   |
| 5 The plates are the neighbours'.           | e They're theirs. |
| 6 You brought those cups with you, Melissa. | f It's mine.      |

## Exercise 4

Complete the sentences by writing one word in each gap.

his | ours | hers | theirs | yours | mine

- 1 Mrs Andrews was a favourite teacher of \_\_\_\_\_, but I was the only student who liked her!
- 2 I met Greg at your house – I think it was at a party of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 I saw those two guys with Maria in a café yesterday. They're new friends of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 Jim and I have known Sophie and Rick for years. They're really good friends of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 I'm not sure how Adam knows George. Perhaps he's a neighbour of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 Beth goes to a different school from me. She goes to school with Isabelle and Mia. She's a classmate of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Exercise 5**

Put the correct word in each gap.

one | yours | ones | his | ours | hers

**After the party**

Everybody brought something to eat, and now I need to decide who these things belong to. I remember my aunt bringing the blue plates so these are definitely <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_. James brought this green one with a cake on it, so that's <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_. These white <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ are ours and this pink <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ is Sarah's. The knives and forks are definitely not <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ because the ones we have look much older than that! Ah, Helen, I have a bowl here that belongs to you. This is <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, isn't it?

**Exercise 6**

Put each sentence into the correct order.

1 is / umbrella / mine / that / .

*That umbrella is mine.*

2 pen / that / yours / is / ?

3 mine / a / he's / friend / of / .

4 a / colleague / she's / Amy's / of / .

5 he / of / yours / a / friend / is / ?

6 yours / that / is / mine / or / ?

# Possessive 's and s'

Using s to show who things belong to

## 's/s' + people, things, places

In this unit you learn to talk about who things belong to using 's, s' and of. You also learn some more irregular forms for plural nouns.

### Use of the apostrophe ('s and s')

You use 's and s' to talk about people's possessions and their relation to each other.

*Silvia is David's wife.*

*Anna and Mark are Jane's cousins.*

*My parents' best friends live in Canada.*

Sometimes, when the meaning is clear, you can use 's without a noun.

*I've seen that car before. It's Diana's.*

*Rob is at Tom's. (= Tom's house)*

If a name ends in s, you just add the apostrophe ' to show possession.

*I think James' painting is better than mine.*

### Remember!

You use of + noun, not 's to talk about objects.

*The walls of the house are green.*

*There's a button at the back of the computer.*

You can also talk about times and places using 's and s'.

*I've just got three days' work in a shop.*

*Bob's lucky. He's having a week's holiday next month.*

*London's shopping centres are very busy in December.*