

**A** A noun can be *countable* or *uncountable*:

**Countable**

- I eat a **banana** every day.
- I like **bananas**.



**Banana** is a *countable* noun.

A countable noun can be singular (**banana**) or plural (**bananas**).

We can use numbers with countable nouns. So we can say 'one banana', 'two bananas' etc.

Examples of nouns usually countable:

- Kate was singing a **song**.
- There's a nice **beach** near here.
- Do you have a **ten-pound note**?
- It wasn't your fault. It was an **accident**.
- There are no **batteries** in the radio.
- We haven't got enough **cups**.

**Uncountable**

- I eat **rice** every day.
- I like **rice**.



**Rice** is an *uncountable* noun.

An uncountable noun has only one form (**rice**).

We cannot use numbers with uncountable nouns. We cannot say 'one rice', 'two rices' etc.

Examples of nouns usually uncountable:

- Kate was listening to (some) **music**.
- There's **sand** in my shoes.
- Do you have any **money**?
- It wasn't your fault. It was bad **luck**.
- There is no **electricity** in this house.
- We haven't got enough **water**.

**B**

You can use **a/an** with singular countable nouns:

**a beach a student an umbrella**

You cannot use singular countable nouns alone (without **a/the/my** etc.):

- I want a **banana**. (*not* I want banana)
- There's been an **accident**. (*not* There's been accident)

You can use *plural* countable nouns alone:

- I like **bananas**. (= bananas in general)
- Accidents** can be prevented.

You cannot normally use **a/an** with uncountable nouns. We do not say 'a sand', 'a music', 'a rice'.

But you can often use **a ... of**. For example:

**a bowl / a packet / a grain** of rice

You can use uncountable nouns alone (without **the/my/some** etc.):

- I eat **rice** every day.
- There's **blood** on your shirt.
- Can you hear **music**?

**C**

You can use **some** and **any** with plural countable nouns:

- We sang **some songs**.
- Did you buy **any apples**?

We use **many** and **few** with plural countable nouns:

- We didn't take **many photographs**.
- I have a **few things** to do.

You can use **some** and **any** with uncountable nouns:

- We listened to **some music**.
- Did you buy **any apple juice**?

We use **much** and **little** with uncountable nouns:

- We didn't do **much shopping**.
- I have a **little work** to do.

# Exercises

# Unit 69

69.1 Some of these sentences need a/an. Correct the sentences where necessary.

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 Joe goes everywhere by bike. <u>He hasn't got car.</u>  | <u>He hasn't got a car.</u> |
| 2 Helen was listening to music when I arrived.            | <u>OK</u>                   |
| 3 We went to very nice restaurant last weekend.           | .....                       |
| 4 I clean my teeth with toothpaste.                       | .....                       |
| 5 I use toothbrush to clean my teeth.                     | .....                       |
| 6 Can you tell me if there's bank near here?              | .....                       |
| 7 My brother works for insurance company in London.       | .....                       |
| 8 I don't like violence.                                  | .....                       |
| 9 Can you smell paint?                                    | .....                       |
| 10 When we were in Rome, we stayed in big hotel.          | .....                       |
| 11 We need petrol. I hope we come to petrol station soon. | .....                       |
| 12 I wonder if you can help me. I have problem.           | .....                       |
| 13 I like your suggestion. It's very interesting idea.    | .....                       |
| 14 John has got interview for job tomorrow.               | .....                       |
| 15 I like volleyball. It's good game.                     | .....                       |
| 16 Liz doesn't usually wear jewellery.                    | .....                       |
| 17 Jane was wearing beautiful necklace.                   | .....                       |

69.2 Complete the sentences using the following words. Use a/an where necessary.

- |                     |         |        |                  |          |             |
|---------------------|---------|--------|------------------|----------|-------------|
| <del>accident</del> | biscuit | blood  | coat             | decision | electricity |
| interview           | key     | moment | <del>music</del> | question | sugar       |
- It wasn't your fault. It was an accident.
  - Listen! Can you hear music?
  - I couldn't get into the house because I didn't have .....
  - It's very warm today. Why are you wearing .....
  - Do you take ..... in your coffee?
  - Are you hungry? Would you like ..... with your coffee?
  - Our lives would be very difficult without .....
  - 'I had ..... for a job yesterday.' 'Did you? How did it go?'
  - The heart pumps ..... through the body.
  - Excuse me, but can I ask you .....
  - I'm not ready yet. Can you wait ....., please?
  - We can't delay much longer. We have to make ..... soon.

69.3 Complete the sentences using the following words. Sometimes the word needs to be plural (-s) and sometimes you need to use a/an.

- |          |        |                       |          |        |          |
|----------|--------|-----------------------|----------|--------|----------|
| air      | day    | friend                | language | letter | meat     |
| patience | people | <del>photograph</del> | queue    | space  | umbrella |
- I had my camera, but I didn't take any photographs.
  - There are seven ..... in a week.
  - A vegetarian is a person who doesn't eat .....
  - Outside the cinema there was ..... of people waiting to see the film.
  - I'm not very good at writing .....
  - Last night I went out with some ..... of mine.
  - There were very few ..... in town today. The streets were almost empty.
  - I'm going out for a walk. I need some fresh .....
  - Gary always wants things quickly. He hasn't got much .....
  - I think it's going to rain. Do you have ..... I could borrow?
  - Do you speak any foreign .....
  - Our flat is very small. We haven't got much .....