

Countable or uncountable?



countable nouns	uncountable nouns
• use <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> in the singular: <i>a job</i>, <i>an animal</i> • can be made plural: <i>cars</i>, <i>books</i> • use <i>some</i> and <i>any</i> in the plural: <i>some friends</i>, <i>any answers</i> • use <i>few</i> and <i>many</i> in the plural: <i>few students</i>, <i>many years</i>	• do not use <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> • cannot be made plural: <i>work</i>, <i>music</i> • use verbs in the singular: <i>The news is good</i>, <i>Music helps me relax</i>. • use <i>some</i> and <i>any</i> in the singular: <i>some food</i>, <i>any advice</i> • use <i>little</i> and <i>much</i> in the singular: <i>little information</i>, <i>much homework</i> • use other words to refer to a quantity: <i>a piece of advice</i>, <i>a small amount of money</i>



Some common uncountable nouns in English

accommodation advice behaviour countryside
damage equipment experience food furniture
homework housework information knowledge
luggage media music news paper pollution
research scenery smoke software stuff
transport work

Let's practise



A/AN OR THE?



A/AN :

The indefinite article



We use a or an:

- with singular, countable nouns mentioned for the first time:

A blue car came round the corner.

We have *a new chemistry teacher*.

- to talk about jobs:

His mother's a doctor.

We do not use a or an with uncountable nouns or plural countable nouns:

Knowledge makes people powerful.

More women go to university in this country than men.

- Use an before words which begin with a vowel sound: *an app, an email* (but not when the letters 'u' or 'e' produce a 'y' sound: *a useful tool, a European student, a university*).
- When 'h' is silent, use an: *an hour, an honest man*

THE :

The definite article



The is used:

- with things we have mentioned before or when it's clear who or what we are referring to from the context:
I've got two new teachers. The maths teacher is from California and the English teacher is from Ireland.
Could you go to the bank for me, please? (i.e. the bank we always use)
- when referring to particular things:
I love music, but I don't like the music my sister listens to.
- with things which are unique: *the Internet, the moon*
- with adjectives to express groups:
In this country, the rich are growing richer and the poor are growing poorer.
- with nationalities:
the French, the Spanish, the Italians
- with superlative adjectives:
the best, the longest
- with ordinal numbers (e.g. *the first, the second, the third*) used as adjectives:
Manolo won the first prize and Igor won the second.
- with names of countries which include these words: Republic, Kingdom, States or Emirates:
The Czech Republic, The United Kingdom, The United States, The United Arab Emirates
- with names of rivers, mountain ranges, seas and oceans:
the Nile, the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Pacific
- with many common expressions:
at the moment, at the age of 15, in the end, on the one hand ... on the other hand

Don't use THE/A/AN:



Do not use the, a or an:

- when talking in general and in the plural:
Teachers are not paid enough.
I can't imagine offices without computers.
- with many common expressions:
in bed/hospital/prison/school: He's in bed.
at home/university/work: I'm at university.
(go) to bed/hospital/university/work: What time do you go to work?

Let's practise



Countable or uncountable?



Grammar

Articles

- 1 Complete each gap with *a*, *the* or *-*.

Working in films

You don't need to be (1) famous actor to get (2) part on (3) film set but you need to be willing to start at (4) bottom. For example, you could spend hours standing in (5) rain by (6) gate in (7) field stopping (8) people from coming in. In (9) Britain and most other countries, you should look for (10) job as (11) 'runner'. Runners fetch things and help generally. This is (12) most junior job and even if you want to be (13) camera operator, it's (14) good place to start. You could do (15) training course but (16) best qualification is (17) experience.

Countable and uncountable nouns

- 2 Complete each sentence with a word from the box. You don't need to use all the words but you will need to make some of them plural.

advice dish equipment experience food
information knowledge luggage meat
scenery suggestion suitcase tool view

- 1 There are few of two courses which can be prepared in less than 20 minutes.
- 2 If you need any climbing like a helmet or ropes, that shop over there is the place to go.
- 3 The amount of the average family eats in Britain seems to go up every year.
- 4 If you take a large number of onto the plane, you have to pay extra.
- 5 Jack sends long emails but they contain little about what he's doing.
- 6 We climbed to the top of the tower where the were spectacular.
- 7 Here are a few on how to get a job in the music industry.
- 8 If you come to dinner, I will make you a traditional like beetroot soup.

Listening | Part 1



07 You will hear people talking in eight different situations. For questions 1–8, choose the best answer (A, B or C).

- 1 You overhear two people talking at the end of the day. Where are they?
A in a shop
B in an office
C at home
- 2 You hear a man talking on the phone about a job he has been offered. How does he feel?
A confused
B upset
C disappointed
- 3 You hear a woman talking on the radio about her job. She says it's
A tiring.
B interesting.
C exciting.
- 4 You hear a woman talking to a group of students. What is she doing?
A asking for information
B giving advice
C explaining a decision
- 5 You hear two people talking about their office. What do they agree about?
A They need more places for storage.
B There are too many people in it.
C There's too much noise.
- 6 You hear a teenager talking to his boss. What excuse does he give for being late?
A He didn't have any transport.
B He wasn't given information he needed.
C He had to help someone.
- 7 You hear a message on a telephone answering service. The speaker wants to
A offer thanks
B make a suggestion
C change a plan
- 8 You hear a girl talking to a friend. What job does she prefer?
A waitress
B kitchen assistant
C receptionist