



Countable and Uncountable Nouns

Familiarity and usage of nouns is the primary lesson we are taught as part of the rules of the English language. Furthering this, nouns can be further divided into two categories: countable and uncountable. It is important to distinguish between these as their usage varies with regards to determiners and verbs.

Countable nouns

As the name suggests, countable nouns are the ones you can count. These nouns have a singular and plural form. In sentences, the singular form can be used with the determiners 'a' or 'an'. The quantity of these can be determined by asking 'how many?' followed by the specific plural noun. Few examples of these are as follows:

Singular	Plural
one rabbit	two rabbits
one goat	two goats
one woman	two women
one concept	two concepts
one park	two parks

Usage:

1. Amir has **three rabbits** in his lawn
2. For eid-ul-azha, we will sacrifice **a goat**.
3. **A woman** is in charge of the project.
4. **Two new parks** have opened up, adjacent to my house.
5. In today's lecture, we discussed **two new concepts**.



Uncountable nouns

These are nouns that can't be counted. They are used for concepts, abstract ideas or physical objects that are too minuscule or too shapeless (liquid, gases) to be counted numerically. These nouns do not usually have a plural form. Given below are a few examples of uncountable nouns.

1. salt
2. water
3. air
4. bread
5. trust
6. luggage
7. tea
8. sugar
9. news
10. jealousy

Note: unlike countable nouns which can be used with 'a' or 'an', uncountable nouns need to be used with phrases such as *a lot of, some, many, a great deal or an exact measurement like a cup, a gallon, two ounces, a pinch of, etc.* in order to know the quantity of an uncountable noun, one can ask '*How much sugar would you like in your tea?*', unless you're referring to a quantity of measurement, in which case you'd ask '*How many spoons of sugar would you like in your tea?*'

Usage

1. **How much** sugar would you like in your tea?
2. I have **many** fears but the most debilitating one has to be of spiders.
3. **How much** rice would you like?
4. There is still **quite a lot** of research to be done.
5. The curry needs **a little bit** of salt.
6. **How much** information should I give him about the event?
7. She had **a lot** of luggage with her.
8. She needs **some** of guidance with her application essays.
9. **How much** progress did you make on your portfolio?



Special cases

While **research** is generally uncountable, i.e. when you refer to it as a general study, it is in certain cases used as a countable noun. When you want to distinguish between one or more **researches**, it would be countable. For example:

I have done some research on this subject versus these three researches show that this vaccine is safe for human testing.

Fear is also both countable and uncountable.

1. I have **many** fears, the most debilitating of which is the fear of spiders.
2. Her eyes showed **some** fear.

The noun **hair** is uncountable and needs to follow the rules of uncountable nouns, thus it can't be used in plural form. Countable noun rules will **ONLY** be applied in relation to individual hair.

Usage:

1. I shampooed **my hair** yesterday.
2. kulsoom's hair **is** curly.
3. My mother has **a few** grey hairs now (individual hair – talking about strands of individual hair).
4. I found **a** hair in my salad (individual).