

# Count and Noncount Nouns: Basic Rules

## Adjectives with Countable and Uncountable Nouns

### The Basic Rules: Count and Noncount Nouns

A count noun is one that can be expressed in plural form, usually with an "s." For example, "cat—cats," "season—seasons," "student—students."

A noncount noun is one that usually cannot be expressed in a plural form. For example, "milk," "water," "air," "money," "food." Usually, you can't say, "He had many moneys."

### Count and Noncount Nouns with Adjectives

Most of the time, this doesn't matter with adjectives. For example, you can say, "The cat was gray" or "The air was gray." However, the difference between a countable and uncountable noun does matter with certain adjectives, such as "some/any," "much/many," and "little/few."

**Some/Any:** **Some** and **any** countable and uncountable nouns.

- "There is **some** water on the floor."
- "There are **some** Mexicans here."
- "Do you have **any** food?"
- "Do you have **any** apples?"

**Much/Many:** **Much** modifies only uncountable nouns. **Many** modifies only countable nouns.

- "We don't have **much** time to get this done."
- "**Many** Americans travel to Europe."

**Little/Few:** **Little** modifies only uncountable nouns.

- "He had **little** food in the house."
- "The doctor had **little** time to think in the emergency room."

**Few** modifies only countable nouns.

- "There are **few** doctors in town."
- "**Few** students like exams."

### Other basic rules

**A lot of/lots of:** **A lot of/lots of** are informal substitutes for *much* and *many*. They are used with uncountable nouns when they mean *much* and with countable nouns when they mean *many*.

- "They have lots of (much) money in the bank."
- "A **lot of** (many) Americans travel to Europe."
- "We got **lots of** (many) mosquitoes last summer."
- "We got **lots of** (much) rain last summer."

**A little bit of:** **A little bit of** is informal and always precedes an uncountable noun.

- "There is **a little bit of** pepper in the soup."
- "There is **a little bit of** snow on the ground."

**Enough:** **Enough** modifies both countable and uncountable nouns.

- "There is **enough** money to buy a car."
- "I have **enough** books to read."

**Plenty of:** **Plenty of** modifies both countable and uncountable nouns.

- "They have **plenty of** money in the bank."
- "There are **plenty of** millionaires in Switzerland."

**No:** **No** modifies both countable and uncountable nouns.

- "There is **no** time to finish now."
- "There are **no** squirrels in the park."