Countable Nouns

Countable nouns are easy to recognize. They are things that we can count. For example: "pen". We can count pens. We can have one, two, three or more pens. Here are some more countable nouns:

- dog, cat, animal, man, person
- bottle, box, litre
- coin, note, dollar
- cup, plate, fork
- table, chair, suitcase, bag

Countable nouns can be singular or plural:

- My dog is playing.
- My dogs are hungry.

We can use the indefinite article a/an with countable nouns:

- A dog is an animal.

When a countable noun is singular, we must use a word like a/the/my/this with it:

- I want an orange. (not I want orange.)
- Where is my bottle? (not Where is bottle?)

When a countable noun is plural, we can use it alone:

- I like oranges.
- Bottles can break.

We can use some and any with countable nouns:

- I’ve got some dollars.
- Have you got any pens?

We can use a few and many with countable nouns:

- I’ve got a few dollars.
- I haven’t got many pens.

"People" is countable. "People" is the plural of "person". We can count people:

- There is one person here.
- There are three people here.
Uncountable Nouns

Uncountable nouns are substances, concepts etc that we cannot divide into separate elements. We cannot "count" them. For example, we cannot count "milk". We can count "bottles of milk" or "litres of milk", but we cannot count "milk" itself. Here are some more uncountable nouns:

- music, art, love, happiness
- advice, information, news
- furniture, luggage
- rice, sugar, butter, water
- electricity, gas, power
- money, currency

We usually treat uncountable nouns as singular. We use a singular verb. For example:

- *This* news is very important.
- Your luggage looks heavy.

We do not usually use the indefinite article *a/an* with uncountable nouns. We cannot say "an information" or "a music". But we can say *a something of*:

- a piece of news
- a bottle of water
- a grain of rice

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

- I've got *some* money.
- Have you got *any* rice?

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

- I've got *a little* money.
- I haven't got *much* rice.

Uncountable nouns are also called "mass nouns".

Here are some more examples of countable and uncountable nouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countable</th>
<th>Uncountable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dollar</td>
<td>money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>song</td>
<td>music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suitcase</td>
<td>luggage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>table</td>
<td>furniture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When you learn a new word, it's a good idea to learn whether it's countable or uncountable.

**Nouns that can be Countable and Uncountable**

Sometimes, the same noun can be countable and uncountable, often with a change of meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countable</th>
<th>Uncountable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are two hairs in my coffee!</td>
<td>hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two lights in our bedroom.</td>
<td>light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shhhhh! I thought I heard a noise. There are so many different noises in the city.</td>
<td>noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you got a paper to read? (newspaper) Hand me those student papers.</td>
<td>paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our house has seven rooms.</td>
<td>room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We had a great time at the party. How many times have I told you no?</td>
<td>time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Macbeth</em> is one of Shakespeare's greatest works.</td>
<td>work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>