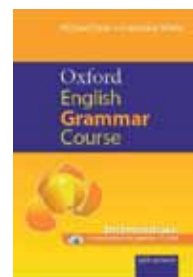


Grammar

Find more grammar exercises like these in the [Oxford English Grammar Course](#) (Intermediate Level).



Revise revise the basics: countable and uncountable nouns

Countable nouns have plurals, and can be used with a/an.

a chair – chairs a house – houses an idea – ideas

Uncountable nouns have no plurals, and cannot normally be used with a/an. Examples: *air, water, sand, intelligence, English, weather.*

Can you open a window? I need air. (NOT ... an-air OR ... airs)

She speaks good English. (NOT ... a-good-English.)

It's terrible weather. (NOT ... a-terrible-weather.)

1 Can you divide these words into uncountable and countable?

book, cup, dust, flour, flower, happiness, knowledge, love, milk, meat, mountain, music, oil, piano, rain, river, snow, song, table, wall

COUNTABLE:

UNCOUNTABLE:

Some nouns can be countable or uncountable, with different meanings.

Paper is made from wood. I'm going out to buy a paper. (= 'a newspaper')

Did you remember to buy coffee? I'll have a (cup of) coffee, please.

My mother never drinks wine. Spain produces some wonderful wines. (= 'kinds of wine')

2 Uncountable, singular countable (with a/an) or plural? Complete the sentences.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Could you pass me? (<i>glass</i>) | 8 She phoned six yesterday. (<i>time</i>) |
| 2 This table is made of (<i>glass</i>) | 9 Three, please. (<i>beer</i>) |
| 3 I need a piece of (<i>wood</i>) | 10 makes you fat. (<i>beer</i>) |
| 4 The house was near (<i>wood</i>) | 11 He hasn't got much (<i>experience</i>) |
| 5 She looked at him with (<i>pity</i>) | 12 It was I won't forget. (<i>experience</i>) |
| 6 It's Anne isn't here. (<i>pity</i>) | 13 There's in the garden. (<i>chicken</i>) |
| 7 goes so quickly. (<i>time</i>) | 14 Do you want or beef? (<i>chicken</i>) |

The following words are normally **uncountable** in English (but **countable** in some other languages). They are normally only **singular**. We can use *some* with them, but not *a/an*. (NOT *a-travel, an-information*)

advice *baggage* *bread* *furniture* *hair* *information* *knowledge* *luck*
luggage *news* *research* *spaghetti* (and *macaroni* etc) *travel* *work*

I need some information. This bread is too expensive.
Her hair is very long. Travel teaches you a lot.

3 Put *a* with the countable nouns and *some* with the uncountable nouns.

..... *baggage* *bread* *bus* *dishwasher* *furniture*
..... *holiday* *house* *luck* *knowledge*
..... *magazine* *problem* *research* *table* *travel*
..... *work*

202 NOUNS

ANSWER KEY

Grammar

1.

COUNTABLE: book, cup, flower, mountain, piano, river, song, table, wall

UNCOUNTABLE: dust, flour, happiness, knowledge, love, milk, meat, music, oil, rain, snow

2.

1. a glass

2. glass.

3. wood.

4. a wood.

5. pity.

6. a pity.

7. Time

8. times

9. beers

10. Beer

11. experience.

12. an experience

13. a chicken

14. chicken

3.

some baggage, some bread, a bus, a dishwasher,
some furniture, a holiday, a house, some luck,
some knowledge, a magazine, a problem, some
research, a table, some travel, some work