

4

Talking about amounts



Video

Countable and uncountable nouns



Video

Quantifiers















How was your birthday yesterday?



Jack didn't buy me *any* presents. We only shared *a piece* of cake, but we had *a lot* of fun!

1 Talking about definite amounts

1.1 Definite amounts are amounts that we can clearly see. We can use **quantity words** to talk about definite amounts. Often quantity words suggest an item's packaging or container, shape, measurement, or that it is part of a whole.

<p>Packaging or container</p> <p><i>a bag of coins</i> </p> <p><i>a carton of eggs</i> </p> <p><i>a cup of tea</i> </p> <p><i>a jar of honey</i> </p> <p><i>a packet of chips</i> </p>	<p>Shape</p> <p><i>a bar of chocolate</i> </p> <p><i>a bunch of flowers</i> </p> <p><i>a loaf of bread</i> </p> <p><i>a sheet of paper</i> </p> <p><i>a slice of toast</i> </p>
<p>Measurement</p> <p><i>a litre of milk</i> </p> <p><i>a spoonful of sugar</i> </p>	<p>Part of a whole</p> <p><i>a clove of garlic</i> </p> <p><i>a piece of cake</i> </p>

Go to **Unit 3** for more information on countable and uncountable nouns.

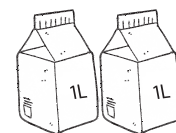
1.2 We use quantity words only with plural countable nouns and uncountable nouns.

- ✓ I need to buy *a kilo of rice*. (uncountable noun)
- ✓ How much is it for *a kilo of potatoes*? (plural countable noun)
- ✗ How much is it for *a kilo of potato*?

Common errors

When the quantity is more than one, we should use the plural form of the quantity word even though the noun is uncountable.

- ✓ *a litre of juice*
- ✓ *two litres of juice*
- ✗ *two litre of juice*
- ✗ *two litres of juices*



2 Talking about indefinite amounts

2.1 Indefinite amounts are amounts that are not clear or exact. We can use **quantifiers** to talk about indefinite amounts.

Amounts	Plural countable nouns	Uncountable nouns
large	<i>I made a lot of / lots of mistakes in the test.</i>	<i>John bought a lot of / lots of food for the barbecue.</i>
	<i>There are plenty of nice restaurants nearby.</i>	<i>There will be plenty of sunshine tomorrow.</i>
	<i>Are there many shops near your school?</i>	<i>Quick! There isn't much time.</i>
small	<i>I am sorry that I will be a few minutes late.</i>	<i>Add a little salt to the soup.</i>
	<i>Few students went to the concert.</i>	<i>My brother does little exercise.</i>

You could mention that *few* and *little* are quite formal. In spoken English, we usually use *not many* and *not much*, e.g. **Not many** students went to the concert.



Common errors

We use *few* and *little* in a negative sense to mean *not many* or *not much*.

Few people enjoyed the play.

(= **Not many** people enjoyed the play.)

There is *little* food in the fridge.

(= There is **not much** food in the fridge.)

On the other hand, we use *a few* and *a little* in a positive sense to mean a small amount or *some*.

A few people enjoyed the play.

(= **Some** people enjoyed the play.)

There is *a little* food in the fridge.

(= There is **some** food in the fridge.)



Common errors

2.2 *Many* and *much* are used mainly in questions and negative statements. In positive sentences, it is more common to use *a lot of* or *lots of*.

*Do you have **many** new clothes?*

(question)

*I don't have **many** new clothes.*

(negative statement)

*I have **a lot of / lots of** new clothes.*

(positive statement)

*Ken didn't eat **much** rice for dinner.*

(negative statement)

*Stella ate **a lot of / lots of** rice for dinner.*

(positive statement)

2.3 We can also use *some* when the exact amount is not stated. It can be used with both plural countable nouns and uncountable nouns.

*I need **some** onions for this dish.*

*Dad gave me **some** good advice.*

3 Some, any, no, none

We often use *some*, *any*, *no* and *none* to talk about amounts. These words can be used with both plural countable nouns and uncountable nouns.

	Uses	Examples
some	in positive statements	There is <i>some</i> bread on the plate.
	in questions (to make offers or requests)	Would you like <i>some</i> tea? Could you buy <i>some</i> biscuits for the party?
	as a pronoun	The cookies look yummy. Can I have <i>some</i> ?
any	in questions	Are there <i>any</i> paper clips?
	in negative statements	We didn't have <i>any</i> time to tidy up.
	as a pronoun	I need a few pencils. Do you have <i>any</i> ?
no	in positive statements	There is <i>no</i> milk left. (= not any milk)
none	as a pronoun	Is there any water? No, there's <i>none</i> .

You could mention that we also use *any* in positive statements with words that are negative in meaning like *never*, *rarely*, *seldom* and *without*, e.g. *Sam did his homework without any help.*

Grammar in text

This section introduces students to the unit focus in context, followed by questions that help them reflect on what they have learnt.

Read the hotel review and answer the questions.

Two years ago, I didn't have much money, so I stayed at this cheap hotel. There were few shops and attractions. I had little interest in leaving the hotel for dinner, so I looked for a restaurant. However, there was none. There should be at least some in a hotel. I had to buy three packets of chips to eat in my room!

- 5 I stayed at the hotel again last week. After a lot of renovation, the hotel is a different place! There are lots of shops now, as well as a few restaurants. There are always plenty of snacks in the lobby, including a big plate of biscuits and a basket of fruit. Overall, it's a nice stay. What complaints do I have this time? I don't have any!

- 1 What quantity words are used to talk about definite amounts? Give two more examples.

three packets of chips, a (big) plate of biscuits, a basket of fruit

- 2 What quantifiers are used to talk about indefinite amounts? Complete the table below.

Amounts	Examples
large	plural countable: <i>lots of shops, plenty of snacks</i> uncountable: <i>much money, a lot of renovation</i>
small	plural countable: <i>few shops and attractions, a few restaurants</i> uncountable: <i>little interest</i>

- 3 Circle the examples of the use of *some* / *any* / *none* as pronouns in the review.

The answers to Q1 and Q2 are underlined in the text (.....) for easy reference.

Let's practise

Exercise 1

Look at the pictures and complete the phrases with the quantity words given. Remember to use the plural form where necessary. Use each word once only.

Exercise 1 provides practice of quantity words.

1 a bunch of bananas

1



2 a litre of milk

2



3 a piece of cheese

3



4 three cups of coffee

4



5 two tubes of toothpaste

5



6 two kilos of tomatoes

6



7 three slices of bread

7



8 a can of lemon tea

8



9 a packet of biscuits

9



10 two bottles of water

10



11 a bar of chocolate

11



12 a tin of beans

12



13 a glass of orange juice

13



14 two bowls of rice

14



15 a jar of peanut butter

15



- bar
- bottle
- bowl
- bunch
- can
- cup
- glass
- jar
- kilo
- litre
- packet
- piece
- slice
- tin
- tube

Exercise 2

Exercise 2 provides practice of *many*, *much*, *a lot of* and *lots of*.

Complete the sentences with 'many', 'much' or 'a lot of' / 'lots of'.

- 1 I don't usually drink much coffee.
- 2 Does Agnes have many brothers and sisters?
- 3 We didn't see many films last year.
- 4 Did you do much shopping in Macao?
- 5 There are a lot of/lots of new restaurants in the new shopping centre.
- 6 There weren't many young people at the concert.
- 7 You can make a lot of/lots of new friends at school clubs.
- 8 Dean fell asleep. He didn't have much interest in the talk.
- 9 My sister spends a lot of/lots of time practising the piano every day.
- 10 We lost all our games. We didn't have much luck in this competition.



Exercise 3

Exercise 3 provides practice of *few*, *little*, *a few* and *a little*.

Read the sentences. Circle the correct answers.

- 1 The store had (few/ little) customers. It was very quiet.
- 2 There's (few/little) wind today, so we can't go sailing.
- 3 There are (few/ little) interesting programmes on TV, so I turned it off.
- 4 Freddie usually buys cheap things because he has (little/a little) pocket money.
- 5 We still have (little/a little) time before the train comes. Let's sit down.
- 6 Kelly has (little/a little) patience with kids. She prefers working with teenagers.
- 7 'Do you have any money?' 'Yes, I have (few/a few) dollars.'
- 8 I have (few/a few) good comic books at home. Shall we read them together?
- 9 Mr Davis has (few/a few) friends here. He sometimes feels lonely.
- 10 I'm going to the supermarket. I need to buy (a few/a little) things.

Exercise 4

Liz, Kate and Jack are getting ready for a party. Complete their conversation with 'some', 'any' or 'no'.

Liz: OK, what do we need for the party?

Jack: Well, we have ⁽¹⁾ some apple juice, but there's ⁽²⁾ no orange juice.

Kate: Don't forget ice! Is there ⁽³⁾ any ice in the fridge?

Jack: Yes, we have ⁽⁴⁾ some ice cubes, but not many. Shall I get ⁽⁵⁾ some bags of ice when I go to the supermarket?

Liz: Yes, I think so. Now, I know we have ⁽⁶⁾ some bread, but are there ⁽⁷⁾ any biscuits or cakes?

Jack: We do have ⁽⁸⁾ some biscuits, but we have ⁽⁹⁾ no cakes.

Kate: We don't have ⁽¹⁰⁾ any party hats either.

Jack: OK, I'll buy orange juice, ice and cakes then. I'll also get ⁽¹¹⁾ some party hats.

Kate: While you're gone, shall we plan ⁽¹²⁾ some party games?

Jack: Yes, of course. It won't be a good party without ⁽¹³⁾ any games!



Exercise 4 provides contextualised practice of *some*, *any* and *no*.

Exercise 5

Tim is talking to his cousin Susan. She is a member of the school Photography Club. Complete their conversation with 'some', 'any', 'no' or 'none'.

Tim: Susan, I have ⁽¹⁾ some questions about the Photography Club.

Susan: Really? You seldom ask me ⁽²⁾ any questions about school clubs.

Tim: Tell me, does the Photography Club organise ⁽³⁾ any trips?

Susan: Yes, we do. On our last trip, we went to Kam Shan Country Park. I took ⁽⁴⁾ some photos of the beautiful views there.

Tim: Did you see ⁽⁵⁾ any monkeys?

Susan: Yes, I saw ⁽⁶⁾ some. Actually, though, I wanted to take photos of a special type of red flower, but there were ⁽⁷⁾ none.

Tim: Does the club organise ⁽⁸⁾ any photography competitions?

Susan: We didn't organise ⁽⁹⁾ any last year, but this year we'll have one. So do you want to join the club, Tim?

Tim: Hmm, I'm not sure. I'm just so busy at the moment — I have ⁽¹⁰⁾ no free time at all.

Susan: You should try to make ⁽¹¹⁾ some. It'll be good for you.



Exercise 5 provides contextualised practice of *some*, *any*, *no* and *none*.

Q6, Q7, Q9 and Q11 provide practice of using these words as pronouns.

Challenge yourself

Exercise 6

Exercise 6 provides contextualised practice of quantifiers.

Sam and Ivy are chatting online. Complete their conversation with 'much', 'many', 'a lot of' / 'lots of', 'little', 'few', 'a little' or 'a few'.

19:25

Sam online

Hi, Ivy. Guess what! Next week, my parents are taking me to stay at the Golden Sun Resort Hotel. I don't have ⁽¹⁾ many chances to stay at places like this, so I'm really excited.

Lucky you! My dad spent ⁽²⁾ a few days there just before Christmas. He spends ⁽³⁾ a lot of/lots of time in hotels, but he says that not ⁽⁴⁾ many places are as good as the Golden Sun.

Mum says that they have ⁽⁵⁾ a lot of/lots of shops there. Did your dad do ⁽⁶⁾ much shopping?

Don't be silly! My dad rarely goes shopping. He has ⁽⁷⁾ little interest in shops! However, they had a lot of concerts in their theatre with famous singers, so he went to ⁽⁸⁾ a few concerts during his stay. He wished he could go more.

Did ⁽⁹⁾ many people go to the concerts?

Dad said the concerts were very popular — ⁽¹⁰⁾ a lot of/lots of people went to them.

But was there ⁽¹¹⁾ much noise from the concerts in his room?

Perhaps there was ⁽¹²⁾ a little noise, but I don't think it was much.

I'll tell you about the noise when we come back. There's ⁽¹³⁾ little chance of Mum and Dad taking me to any concerts. We'll probably spend time in the fitness centre instead. Dad says they have ⁽¹⁴⁾ a lot of/lots of good equipment there. There are ⁽¹⁵⁾ a lot of/lots of facilities besides rooms in this hotel.

Be sure to go to the Quick Noodle Cafe. It's in a quiet corner of the hotel, so ⁽¹⁶⁾ few people know about it, but Dad says the food is great.

Exercise 7

Rick is the chairperson of the Outdoors Club. He wants to post a notice on the Student Activities webpage. Help him complete the notice. Choose the best word(s) to complete each blank and circle the correct letter.

Exercise 7 provides roundup practice of the language students have learnt in this unit.

(1) our members are going to go camping in Sai Kung next month. (2) members are already asking me questions about the trip! So, here are the answers to (3) questions. (We don't have (4) time to plan!)

Will there be (5) mosquitoes?

Of course. That's only natural. Don't forget your insect repellent.

Is there (6) electricity at the campsite?

No, there (7). At least, there wasn't any last week when I visited the site.

Is there any running water at the campsite?

No, there (8). This means that there are (9) showers.

Are there (10) restaurants nearby?

No, there aren't. We will cook our own food. We will take a (11) of rice with us, as well as a few (12) bread and (13) meat.

Do (14) go to the site?

Sorry, it is far away, so (15) buses go there! We will have to walk an hour to the site.

- 1 A A lot of
 B Any
 C Few

- 2 A A little
 B Much
 C Some

- 3 A a few
 B any
 C plenty

- 4 A little
 B much
 C some

- 5 A little
 B many
 C none

- 6 A any
 B few
 C lots of

- 7 A is none
 B isn't none
 C is none electricity

- 8 A is no
 B is some
 C isn't any

- 9 A a few
 B little
 C no

- 10 A not any
 B any
 C few

- 11 A bag
 B bar
 C bottle

- 12 A loaf of
 B loaves
 C loaves of

- 13 A any tins of
 B some tin of
 C some tins of

- 14 A any buses
 B few bus
 C lots of buses

- 15 A any
 B no
 C some