

## List of Uncountable Words

money  
luggage  
baggage  
currency  
equipment  
information  
travel  
soap  
toothpaste  
food  
sugar  
rice  
butter  
flour  
advice  
knowledge  
progress  
research  
work  
leather  
wool  
wood  
coal  
oil  
gas  
weather  
homework  
cotton  
silk  
furniture  
patience  
impatience  
talent  
energy  
experience  
vinegar  
polish  
clothing

# Countable and uncountable Words

## 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

Liquids: -water, oil, beer...

Powders and grains: -sugar, sand, salt, rice...

Materials: -glass, wood, plastic...

Foods that we cut: -meat, bread, watermelon...

General Emotions: -happiness, anger, ...

General Categories: -money, furniture, mail, jewelry...

Others: -information, homework, clothing, work, news,  
equipment, advice

Note that an uncountable noun can often be transformed into a countable noun by adding a *quantifier*.

Examples: -A *cup* of coffee.

-A *bag* of rice.

-A *slice* of bread.

-A *piece* of furniture

Examples: Do we have any milk?

- Yes, there is some milk in the refrigerator.

Did you have any difficulties getting here?

- No, I didn't have any difficulties.

Note: -The articles **a/an** are only used with singular countable nouns.

-The article **the** can be used with any type of noun, but the noun must be specifically defined.

## Countable Nouns

Countable nouns refer to things that we can count. Such nouns can take either singular or plural form.

Concrete nouns may be countable.  
There are a dozen *flowers* in the vase.  
He ate *an apple* for a snack.

Collective nouns are countable.

She attended three *classes* today.  
London is home to several *orchestras*.

Some proper nouns are countable.

There are many *Greeks* living in New York.  
The *Vanderbilts* would throw lavish parties at their Newport summer mansion.

## Uncountable Nouns

Uncountable nouns refer to things that we cannot count. Such nouns take only singular form.

Abstract nouns are uncountable.  
The price of *freedom* is constant vigilance.  
Her writing shows *maturity* and *intelligence*.

Some concrete nouns are uncountable (when understood in their undivided sense).

The price of *oil* has stabilized recently.  
May I borrow some *rice*?

While uncountable nouns do not generally take a plural form, sometimes they may be pluralized when used in a countable sense. The difference between the uncountable and countable meanings of nouns that are used in either sense can be seen in the following chart:

Uncountable Sense	Countable Sense
<b>Art</b> is often called an imitation of life.	I read a book about the folk <b>arts</b> of Sweden.
<b>Life</b> is precious.	A cat has nine <b>lives</b> .
He likes to eat <b>pizza</b> .	How many <b>pizzas</b> should we order?
<b>Religion</b> has been a powerful force in history.	Many <b>religions</b> are practiced in the United States.

She has beautiful **skin**.

Dr. Moulton is an expert in ancient Greek **sculpture**.

We use only recycled **paper** in our office.

The hull of a kayak is made of animal **skins**.

We have several **sculptures** in our home.

Where are those important **papers**?

## Using Articles with Countable and Uncountable Nouns

A countable noun always takes either the indefinite (*a, an*) or definite (*the*) article when it is singular. When plural, it takes the definite article if it refers to a definite, specific group and no article if it is used in a general sense.

*The guest* of honor arrived late.

You are welcome as *a guest* in our home.

*The guests* at your party yesterday made a lot of noise.

*Guests* are welcome here anytime.

Uncountable nouns never take the indefinite article (*a* or *an*), but they do take singular verbs. *The* is sometimes used with uncountable nouns in the same way it is used with plural countable nouns, that is, to refer to a specific object, group, or idea.

*Information* is a precious commodity in our computerized world.

*The information* in your files is correct.

*Sugar* has become more expensive recently.

Please pass me *the sugar*.

## Categories of Uncountable Nouns

Abstract	Material	Generic	Non-Plurals with - s
advice	meat	fruit	mathematics
help	rice	wildlife	economics
information	bread	equipment	physics
knowledge	cake	machinery	civics
trouble	coffee	furniture	ethics
work	ice cream	mail	mumps
enjoyment	water	luggage	measles
fun	oil	jewelry	news
recreation	grass	clothing	tennis
relaxation	hair	money	(other games)