

What is an uncountable noun?

Countable nouns are nouns which can be counted in numbers. For example, one house / two houses. When we use countable nouns, we use the article "a" and the plural "s" (a house, two houses).

Uncountable nouns are nouns which can't be counted. For example, information. It is not possible to say one information/ two informations. The word "information" can't be counted using numbers. It can never have a plural "s". It can never have an article "a" or "an". And it can never be quantified with any number.

What types of uncountable nouns are there?

Most uncountable nouns relate to:

- liquids (milk, water)
- abstract ideas (advice, chaos, motivation)
- powder and grain (rice, wheat, sand)
- mass nouns (furniture, hair, transportation)
- natural phenomena (sunshine, snow, rain, weather)
- states of being (sleep, stress, childhood)
- feelings (anger, happiness, enthusiasm, courage)
- gas (oxygen, air)

Uncountable Nouns & Grammar

How much ...? = uncountable nouns / How many ...? = countable nouns /

These = countable / This = uncountable

many = countable / a lot of = uncountable

not many = countable / not much uncountable (we use "much" with negative uncountable nouns)

To express an amount of an uncountable noun, you must use other words.

some information = a piece of information

some clothing = one item of clothing / two items of clothing

some equipment = a piece of equipment / two pieces of equipment

some water = a cup of water / two glasses of water

Uncountable Noun List

A-F	G - M	N-S	T - Z
accommodation advertising air aid advice anger art assistance bread business butter calm cash chaos cheese childhood clothing coffee content corruption courage currency damage danger darkness data determination economics education electricity employment energy entertainment enthusiasm equipment evidence failure fame fire flour food freedom friendship fuel furniture fun	genetics gold grammar guilt hair happiness harm health heat help homework honesty hospitality housework humour imagination importance information innocence intelligence jealousy juice justice kindness knowledge labour lack laughter leisure literature litter logic love luck magic management metal milk money motherhood motivation music	nature news nutrition obesity oil old age oxygen paper patience permission pollution poverty power pride production progress pronunciation publicity punctuation quality quantity racism rain relaxation research respect rice room rubbish safety salt sand seafood shopping silence sleep smoke snow software soup speed spelling sport strength stress success sugar sunshine	tea tennis time tolerance trade traffic transportation travel trust understanding unemployment usage violence vision warmth water wealth weather weight welfare wheat width wildlife wisdom wood work yoga youth

Irregular Uncountable Nouns

Some nouns can be both countable and uncountable. See my website www.ieltsliz.com (vocabulary page) for details and explanations.

Uncountable nouns which can also be countable: hair / light / business / paper / time / work / room

Practice with Countable and Uncountable Nouns

Fill in the gaps using one of the following: many / much / a lot of.

1. wildlife are losing their habitation due to deforestation.
2. I haven't heard news about the recent events in Europe.
3. There aren't sports lessons offered in the school curriculum.
4. I can't go out tonight because I've got work.
5. It is often thought that people who have only traveled in their own country don't have tolerance for others compared to people who have been abroad.
6. literature that students read at school is classical.
7. education policies are designed to protect students but ensure a high level of learning.

Fill in the gaps with one of the following: is / are.

1. Silence essential in libraries to ensure that people can concentrate on what they are reading.
2. There a lot of company advertising during major sports events.
3. Shopping one of the most popular leisure activities for women.
4. There a lot of information available online about IELTS.
5. There a lot of traffic in city centers during rush hour.
6. There not enough money spent on research for cancer.
7. Water essential for plants to thrive.
8. I think that childhood one of the best times of a person's life.
9. The management procedures difficult to understand.
10. Not enough aid given to third world countries.

Answers

Please see my blog for answers: www.ieltsliz.com/vocabulary (see the uncountable noun page)