

I'm not a robot



Some any a an

The difference between a, an, some, and any can be quite confusing for many people. Most simply “a” and “an” are used with singular countable nouns while “some” and “any” are used with countable and uncountable plural nouns. “A” is used with singular nouns that begin with a consonant. For example: Can I have a cup of water? There is a dog in the pool. This is a cool car. “An” is used with singular nouns that begin with a vowel. For example: Can I have an enormous cup of water? There is an excited dog in the pool. This is an ancient car. “Some” is used with plural countable and uncountable nouns in positive statements. For example: There is some cheese in the refrigerator. I have to do some homework. She has some work to do. “Any” is used with plural countable and uncountable nouns in negative statements and questions. For example: I don’t have any cheese in my fridge. She doesn’t have any homework. Is there any work to do? Normally with questions, you use “any” for plural countable and uncountable nouns. However, there are 3 major exceptions to this rule. Would you like some coffee? Can I have some coffee? How about we go out for some coffee? Complete the following sentences with either “a”, “an”, “some”, or “any”. Countable nouns are nouns that we can count: car, house, book, etc. We can say one car, two cars, three cars, etc. Countable nouns have singular and plural forms: a car/cars, a house/houses, a book/books, etc. A/an + singular countable noun We CANNOT use a singular countable noun without a determiner like a/an, the, my, your, her, etc. I have car. I have a car. When I was child. When I was a child. Uncountable nouns Uncountable nouns are nouns that we cannot count: money, milk, rain, etc. We cannot say one money, two moneys, etc. So, uncountable nouns do not have a plural form; they only have a singular form: money, milk, rain, etc. Do NOT use a/an We cannot use a/an + uncountable noun. A/an means ‘one’, and we cannot count uncountable nouns. I need a money. I need money. We need to buy a sugar. We need to buy sugar. Types of words that are uncountable Some types of words that are typically uncountable are: Food, drinks and liquids: cheese, bread, pasta, coffee, milk, petrol, fuel, etc. Materials: iron, wood, metal, paper, plastic, etc. Abstract ideas and feelings: information, advice, strength, time, love, excitement, etc. Illnesses: diabetes, Alzheimer’s, cancer, etc. Languages: English, French, Spanish, etc. Uncountable in English but not in other languages Some nouns are uncountable in English, but they are countable in other languages. Some of them are advice, news (it ends in -s, but it’s a singular word), furniture, luggage, baggage, bread, cheese, toast, etc. Nouns that can be countable and uncountable Some nouns can be countable and uncountable because they can refer to a unit or to ‘mass’ or ‘material’. Compare: Yesterday I had two coffees. (= two cups of coffee) I love coffee. (= the liquid that we drink) I found one hair in my soup. (one single hair) She has beautiful hair. (= the mass of hair on her head) A/an, some, any Download full-size image from Pinterest A/an We use a/an + singular countable noun. I have a new car. She has a brother and a sister. We cannot use a/an before a plural noun or an uncountable noun. We need to buy a sugar. I need to buy sugar. We saw a very beautiful places. We saw very beautiful places. Some/any We use some and any before countable plural nouns or uncountable singular nouns. He didn’t give me any coins. He didn’t give me any coins. He gave me some money. Some We use some in positive sentences. Any We use any in negative sentences and questions. She didn’t send me any messages. Have you got any brothers or sisters? But we use some in questions when we are asking for something, or we are offering something. Can I have some tea? (=I’m asking for some tea.) Would you like some tea? (=I’m offering you some tea.) Page 2 Countable nouns are nouns that we can count: car, house, book, etc. We can say one car, two cars, three cars, etc. Countable nouns have singular and plural forms: a car/cars, a house/houses, a book/books, etc. A/an + singular countable noun We CANNOT use a singular countable noun without a determiner like a/an, the, my, your, her, etc. I have car. I have a car. When I was child. When I was a child. Uncountable nouns Uncountable nouns are nouns that we cannot count: money, milk, rain, etc. We cannot say one money, two moneys, etc. So, uncountable nouns do not have a plural form; they only have a singular form: money, milk, rain, etc. Do NOT use a/an We cannot use a/an + uncountable noun. A/an means ‘one’, and we cannot count uncountable nouns. I need a money. I need money. We need to buy a sugar. We need to buy sugar. Types of words that are uncountable Some types of words that are typically uncountable are: Food, drinks and liquids: cheese, bread, pasta, coffee, milk, petrol, fuel, etc. Materials: iron, wood, metal, paper, plastic, etc. Abstract ideas and feelings: information, advice, strength, time, love, excitement, etc. Illnesses: diabetes, Alzheimer’s, cancer, etc. Languages: English, French, Spanish, etc. Uncountable in English but not in other languages Some nouns are uncountable in English, but they are countable in other languages. Some of them are advice, news (it ends in -s, but it’s a singular word), furniture, luggage, baggage, bread, cheese, toast, etc. Nouns that can be countable and uncountable Some nouns can be countable and uncountable because they can refer to a unit or to ‘mass’ or ‘material’. Compare: Yesterday I had two coffees. (= two cups of coffee) I love coffee. (= the liquid that we drink) I found one hair in my soup. (one single hair) She has beautiful hair. (= the mass of hair on her head) A/an, some, any Download full-size image from Pinterest A/an We use a/an + singular countable noun. I have a new car. She has a brother and a sister. We cannot use a/an before a plural noun or an uncountable noun. We need to buy a sugar. I need to buy sugar. We saw a very beautiful places. We saw very beautiful places. Some/any We use some and any before countable plural nouns or uncountable singular nouns. He gave me some coins. He didn’t give me any coins. He gave me some money. Some We use some in positive sentences. Any We use any in negative sentences and questions. She didn’t send me any messages. Have you got any brothers or sisters? But we use some in questions when we are asking for something, or we are offering something. Can I have some tea? (=I’m asking for some tea.) Would you like some tea? (=I’m offering you some tea.) Page 3 Countable nouns are nouns that we can count: car, house, book, etc. We can say one car, two cars, three cars, etc. Countable nouns have singular and plural forms: a car/cars, a house/houses, a book/books, etc. A/an + singular countable noun We CANNOT use a singular countable noun without a determiner like a/an, the, my, your, her, etc. I have car. I have a car. When I was child. When I was a child. Uncountable nouns Uncountable nouns are nouns that we cannot count: money, milk, rain, etc. We cannot say one money, two moneys, etc. So, uncountable nouns do not have a plural form; they only have a singular form: money, milk, rain, etc. Do NOT use a/an We cannot use a/an + uncountable noun. A/an means ‘one’, and we cannot count uncountable nouns. I need a money. I need money. We need to buy a sugar. We need to buy sugar. Types of words that are uncountable Some types of words that are typically uncountable are: Food, drinks and liquids: cheese, bread, pasta, coffee, milk, petrol, fuel, etc. Materials: iron, wood, metal, paper, plastic, etc. Abstract ideas and feelings: information, advice, strength, time, love, excitement, etc. Illnesses: diabetes, Alzheimer’s, cancer, etc. Languages: English, French, Spanish, etc. Uncountable in English but not in other languages Some nouns are uncountable in English, but they are countable in other languages. Some of them are advice, news (it ends in -s, but it’s a singular word), furniture, luggage, baggage, bread, cheese, toast, etc. Nouns that can be countable and uncountable Some nouns can be countable and uncountable because they can refer to a unit or to ‘mass’ or ‘material’. Compare: Yesterday I had two coffees. (= two cups of coffee) I love coffee. (= the liquid that we drink) I found one hair in my soup. (one single hair) She has beautiful hair. (= the mass of hair on her head) A/an, some, any Download full-size image from Pinterest A/an We use a/an + singular countable noun. I have a new car. She has a brother and a sister. We cannot use a/an before a plural noun or an uncountable noun. We need to buy a sugar. I need to buy sugar. We saw a very beautiful places. We saw very beautiful places. Some/any We use some and any before countable plural nouns or uncountable singular nouns. He gave me some coins. He didn’t give me any coins. He gave me some money. Some We use some in positive sentences. Any We use any in negative sentences and questions. She didn’t send me any messages. Have you got any brothers or sisters? But we use some in questions when we are asking for something, or we are offering something. Can I have some tea? (=I’m asking for some tea.) Would you like some tea? (=I’m offering you some tea.) Quantifiers - Some, Any, A, An (This is an extract from my book: A and The Explained) Download this explanation in PDF here. Click here for our complete programme to perfect your English grammar. English Exercises > countables - uncountables exercises A and AN We use A/AN (articles) with singular countable nouns. My brother has a dog and my sister has a cat. There is an accident on the corner. A is used when the next word starts with a consonant sound. A book A guitar A friend A university (The start of the word university sounds like YOU, a consonant sound). AN is used when the next word starts with a vowel sound. An apple An ice-cream An orange An hour (the letter H in this word is silent so it sounds like it starts with a vowel). Learn more about Definite and Indefinite Articles. We use SOME and ANY with plural nouns and uncountable nouns. Some is generally used in positive sentences. Any is generally used in negative sentences. I have some information for you about flights to Paris.(Positive - Uncountable) I don’t have any information for you about flights to Paris.(Negative - Uncountable) We met some friends for drinks after work yesterday. (Positive - Plural Countable) I didn’t see any friends there on Thursday.(Negative - Plural Countable) I think he will have some time to speak to you today. (Positive - Uncountable) I don’t think he will have any time to speak to you today.(Negative - Uncountable) You can also use SOME and ANY in a sentence without a noun if the meaning of the sentence is clear. I didn’t eat any salad but Peter ate some. (salad) Sean took lots of photos of the mountains but Emma didn’t take any. (photos) Questions with Some and Any Generally, we use ANY in questions. Do you know any famous people? Do you have any children? But, SOME is used in the following circumstances: 1. When we are offering something. Would you like some coffee? Do you want some sugar for your coffee? 2. When we are asking for something. Could I have some salt, please? Can I have some fries with that? 3. When we are suggesting something. Why don’t we watch some movies on TV tonight? Why don’t you give her some advice? You can also use SOME and ANY in a sentence without a noun if the meaning of the sentence is clear. I didn’t eat any salad but Peter ate some. (salad) Sean took lots of photos of the mountains but Emma didn’t take any. (photos) Summary Chart Try our interactive game to practice this: Some - Any - A - An - Game You should also see our notes about Countable vs Uncountable Nouns. You may be interested in learning about the difference between Much, Many, Lot and Few Read more about other quantifiers. Try the following exercise. Can you get 40 out of 40 correct? If you found this grammar guide about the difference between Some, Any, A and An in English useful, let others know about it. Understanding when to use a, an, some, or any can be tricky, even for intermediate English learners. These words, known as quantifiers, help describe the amount or presence of nouns, but choosing the right one depends on both the noun and the context of the sentence.The following “A, An, Some, or Any Exercise” will help you practice using these quantifiers.Use a or an when you’re referring to a single, non-specific item—something that isn’t particular or unique. The main difference between a and an is based on the sound that follows the article:A is used before words that start with a consonant sound.An is used before words that begin with a vowel sound.Examples:“I saw a dog in the park.” (dog starts with a consonant sound)“Can I have an apple?” (apple starts with a vowel sound)Common Mistake: People sometimes misuse a and an by focusing on the first letter rather than the sound. For instance, “a hour” is incorrect because hour begins with a vowel sound, so it should be “an hour.”Some and any are used with plural nouns or uncountable nouns to talk about an indefinite quantity or amount. They differ based on whether the sentence is positive, negative, or a question:Some is usually used in affirmative (positive) sentences.Any is often used in negative sentences or questions.Examples:“I have some books to read this weekend.” (some in a positive sentence)“Do you have any questions about the assignment?” (any in a question)“She doesn’t have any money left.” (any in a negative sentence)Common Mistake: Learners sometimes use some instead of any in negative sentences, such as, “I don’t have some time,” when it should be “I don’t have any time.Before doing the exercise, you may also be interested in understanding the difference between countable and uncountable nouns.Some and Any Lesson SummaryTags: Exercises on Determiners Index of contents A, an, any, some Something - somebody.. Worksheets - handouts Home Content Quantifiers, possessives and demonstratives Countable nouns: a/an, some and any I've got an apple and a banana. I haven't got an orange. He's got some pens. Has the classroom got any computers? Have you got any cousins? He hasn't got any pencils. I eat two apples every day. Would you like some grapes? Countable nouns have a singular form and a plural form. Singular nouns We use: a/an + singular countable noun We use an with singular countable nouns that start with a vowel. Singular a /an noun + I've got a banana. an apple. - I haven't got a tomato. an orange. ? Have you got a potato? an orange? Plural nouns Most nouns add -s. apple → apples banana →bananas We use some with plural countable nouns in positive sentences. We use any with plural countable nouns in negative sentences and in most questions. Plural some/any noun + I've got some bananas. apples. oranges. - I haven't got any ? Have you got any potatoes? Add -es after -s, -sh, -ss, -ch and sometimes after -o. box → boxes dish →dishes dress →dresses beach →beaches tomato →tomatoes Change -y to -ies. Some plural nouns are irregular. We don't form the plural with s or -es. some womensome womans three childrenthree childs Countable nouns are things and people that we can count. I've got an apple and two bananas. There are twelve students in my class. We use a/an with singular countable nouns. I've got an orange and a banana. We can use numbers with plural countable nouns to say how many. I eat two apples every day. We use some with plural countable nouns in positive sentences. We use any with plural countable nouns in negative sentences and in most questions. I haven't got any pens. Have you got any eggs? We also use some in questions to ask for things or to offer something. Would you like some grapes? Grammar contents Practice 1 Multiple choice Practice 2 Gap-fill Practice 3 Gap-fill Practice 4 Gap-fill Grammar contentsView all Present perfect and past perfectPresent perfect continuousQuantifiers, possessives and demonstratives