

□ EXERCISE 8. Using nouns as modifiers. (Chart 7-3)

Directions: Think of common expressions in which the given nouns are used to modify other nouns. Work in pairs, in groups, or as a class.

Example: flower → a flower vase, a flower garden, a flower shop, etc.

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. cotton | 6. telephone | 11. silk | 16. kitchen |
| 2. grammar | 7. mountain | 12. morning | 17. baby |
| 3. birthday | 8. government | 13. street | 18. vegetable |
| 4. chicken | 9. football | 14. newspaper | 19. office |
| 5. airplane | 10. bedroom | 15. hotel | 20. bicycle |

7-4 COUNT AND NONCOUNT NOUNS

(a) I bought <i>a chair</i> . Sam bought <i>three chairs</i> . (b) We bought <i>some furniture</i> . <i>INCORRECT:</i> We bought some <i>furnitures</i> . <i>INCORRECT:</i> We bought <i>a furniture</i> .		<i>Chair</i> is a count noun; chairs are items that can be counted. <i>Furniture</i> is a noncount noun. In grammar, furniture cannot be counted.	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL	
COUNT NOUN	<i>a chair</i> <i>one chair</i>	∅ <i>chairs*</i> <i>two chairs</i> <i>some chairs</i> <i>a lot of chairs</i> <i>many chairs</i>	A count noun: (1) may be preceded by <i>a/an</i> in the singular. (2) takes a final <i>-s/-es</i> in the plural.
NONCOUNT NOUN	∅ <i>furniture*</i> <i>some furniture</i> <i>a lot of furniture</i> <i>much furniture</i>		A noncount noun: (1) is not immediately preceded by <i>a/an</i> . (2) has no plural form, so does not take a final <i>-s/-es</i> .

*∅ = nothing.

□ EXERCISE 9. Count and noncount nouns. (Chart 7-4)

Directions: Look at the *italicized* nouns in the sentences. Write "C" above the count nouns and "NC" above the noncount nouns.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|----|
| | C | C | C | | NC |
|--|---|---|---|--|----|
- I bought some *chairs*, *tables*, and *desks*. In other words, I bought some *furniture*.
 - Ann likes to wear *jewelry*. Today she is wearing four *rings*, six *bracelets*, and a *necklace*.
 - We saw beautiful *mountains*, *fields*, and *lakes* on our trip. In other words, we saw beautiful *scenery*.
 - Gold* and *iron* are metals.
 - I used an *iron* to press my wrinkled shirt.
 - In the United States, *baseball* is called the national pastime. To play it, you need a *baseball* and a bat.

7-5 NONCOUNT NOUNS

(a) I bought some chairs, tables, and desks. In other words, I bought some <i>furniture</i> .	Many noncount nouns refer to a "whole" that is made up of different parts. In (a): <i>furniture</i> represents a whole group of things that is made up of similar but separate items.
(b) I put some <i>sugar</i> in my <i>coffee</i> .	In (b): <i>sugar</i> and <i>coffee</i> represent whole masses made up of individual particles or elements.*
(c) I wish you <i>luck</i> .	Many noncount nouns are abstractions. In (c): <i>luck</i> is an abstract concept, an abstract "whole." It has no physical form; you can't touch it. You can't count it.
(d) <i>Sunshine</i> is warm and cheerful.	A phenomenon of nature, such as <i>sunshine</i> , is frequently used as a noncount noun, as in (d).
(e) NONCOUNT: Ann has brown <i>hair</i> . COUNT: Tom has a <i>hair</i> on his jacket.	Many nouns can be used as either noncount or count nouns, but the meaning is different; e.g., <i>hair</i> in (e) and <i>light</i> in (f). (Dictionaries written especially for learners of English as a second language are a good source of information on count/noncount usages of nouns.)
(f) NONCOUNT: I opened the curtains to let in some <i>light</i> . COUNT: Don't forget to turn off the <i>light</i> before you go to bed.	

*To express a particular quantity, some noncount nouns may be preceded by unit expressions: *a spoonful of sugar, a glass of water, a cup of coffee, a quart of milk, a loaf of bread, a grain of rice, a bowl of soup, a bag of flour, a pound of meat, a piece of furniture, a piece of paper, a piece of jewelry.*

7-6 SOME COMMON NONCOUNT NOUNS

This list is a sample of nouns that are commonly used as noncount nouns. Many other nouns can also be used as noncount nouns.

- (a) WHOLE GROUPS MADE UP OF SIMILAR ITEMS: *baggage, clothing, equipment, food, fruit, furniture, garbage, hardware, jewelry, junk, luggage, machinery, mail, makeup, money/cash/change, postage, scenery, traffic, etc.*
- (b) FLUIDS: *water, coffee, tea, milk, oil, soup, gasoline, blood, etc.*
- (c) SOLIDS: *ice, bread, butter, cheese, meat, gold, iron, silver, glass, paper, wood, cotton, wool, etc.*
- (d) GASES: *steam, air, oxygen, nitrogen, smoke, smog, pollution, etc.*
- (e) PARTICLES: *rice, chalk, corn, dirt, dust, flour, grass, hair, pepper, salt, sand, sugar, wheat, etc.*
- (f) ABSTRACTIONS:
—*beauty, confidence, courage, education, enjoyment, fun, happiness, health, help, honesty, hospitality, importance, intelligence, justice, knowledge, laughter, luck, music, patience, peace, pride, progress, recreation, significance, sleep, truth, violence, wealth, etc.*
—*advice, information, news, evidence, proof, etc.*
—*time, space, energy, etc.*
—*homework, work, etc.*
—*grammar, slang, vocabulary, etc.*
- (g) LANGUAGES: *Arabic, Chinese, English, Spanish, etc.*
- (h) FIELDS OF STUDY: *chemistry, engineering, history, literature, mathematics, psychology, etc.*
- (i) RECREATION: *baseball, soccer, tennis, chess, bridge, poker, etc.*
- (j) ACTIVITIES: *driving, studying, swimming, traveling,* walking, etc.* (and other gerunds)
- (k) NATURAL PHENOMENA: *weather, dew, fog, hail, heat, humidity, lightning, rain, sleet, snow, thunder, wind, darkness, light, sunshine, electricity, fire, gravity, etc.*

*British spelling: *travelling*.

Summary Box 2.3 Countable versus non-countable contexts

Properties of an entity in:

Countable context

alan

individuation

clear boundaries

no part equals the whole

treated as discrete, separate

often treated as concrete

can become plural

co-occurs with *each, many*

Typical examples:

*car, house, boy**monkey, fault, way*

Non-countable context

Ø

non-individuation

indistinct boundaries

any part equals the whole

treated as substance-like, mass

often treated as abstract

cannot become plural

co-occurs with *much**drinking, waiting, luck,**sincerity, education, music*

cash	gar
garbage	scis
steel	Eng
equipment	pat

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Conceptual structure

As may have become clear in is closely connected, both his many cases, the basic meaning'. The definite article conceptually, to the demonstrative *the X* is 'that particular X'. The difference in how articles are used to mark IDENTIFYING things.

Classifying is a process by which we identify a class of objects. We talk about objects. We ask to describe a new scene or objects. Classifying objects, identifying an article.

[11] there's *a* farmhouse

If, however, you are trying to identify an object, you use the article *a*.

[12] Can you see *the* farmhouse truck?

Identifying is a process by which we identify other members of the same class. It has the effect of reference (with respect to a thing or things). Indeed, the definite article can be treated as already identifying, as in 'talking about' whereas identifying is 'talking about'. The same question, [13b], or by identifying, as in [13c].

[13] a. What's making the noise?
b. It's probably a car.
c. It's probably the car.

Or we could say that the answer to [13a] would be 'would you classify it?' and [13b] would be 'would you identify it?'

Exercise 2.C

(a) Look at the italicized words in the following sentences and decide in each case if the context is countable or non-countable.

- 1 *Eating* is his favorite thing to do.
- 2 Oh, yeah? What *food* does he like?
- 3 Everything, even *vegetables*.
- 4 How about a raw *onion*?
- 5 Yes, and fresh *garlic*.
- 6 Really? I guess he must like *beans*.
- 7 Yeah, especially with *rice*.
- 8 And *chocolate* of course.
- 9 Of course, but surprisingly, he isn't fond of *cake*.
- 10 What? I'd kill for a chocolate *cake*!

(b) Think about how the following nouns are typically used and, with the help of Box 2.3, try to decide if they appear in mostly countable contexts, mostly non-countable contexts, in both, or in neither.