

- Waiter: Would you like to order any desserts?
 Guest: Yes, please. What is tiramisu?
 Waiter: It's a type of Italian cake.
 Guest: What's in it?
 Waiter: It's mainly cookies dipped in espresso, a type of coffee. The cookies are layered with cream and cocoa powder and refrigerated. It's served cold.

Presentation

Nouns can be countable, uncountable or both.

Countable nouns have a singular and a plural form:
a dessert, desserts; a cake, cakes

Uncountable nouns only have a singular form (*advice, advices, furniture, furnitures, milk, milks*) and use a singular verb: *Cake is a dessert.*

Countable and uncountable nouns

Some nouns are both countable and uncountable, but the meaning changes:

There's some pizza left. (= part of a pizza)

There are some pizzas in the oven. (= more than one whole pizza)

The job interview was an interesting experience. (= a specific experience)

Experience is more important than a degree for this job. (= knowledge or skills in general)

Keep your seatbelts fastened at all times. (= on all occasions)

There isn't much time left! (= the general concept of time)

Do you drink coffee? (= coffee in general)

I'd like a coffee, please. (The speaker omits "cup of" as in *I'd like a cup of coffee, please.* This is also true for many type of drinks: *an orange juice, a water,* etc.)

Only plural or only singular

Some nouns are only plural (they have no singular form) and need a plural verb. They include: *glasses (for your eyes), goods, jeans, savings, scissors, stairs, pants.*

The goods are at the warehouse.

Are these your glasses? (not *Is this your glasses?*)

Some nouns are only singular (they have no plural form) and need a singular verb. They include: *news, politics, economics, mathematics.*

Mathematics is my favorite subject.

The news isn't good I'm afraid.

Singular or plural

Nouns that describe **groups of people** (*band, class, family, government, staff, team*) can take a **singular or plural** verb.

Our family is/are coming to our house for Christmas.

When we think of the group as being made up of many individuals, each acting separately, we use a plural form:

The government are currently discussing the proposal.
 (= the various members of the government)

When acting as a united group, we use a singular form:
The government is ready to cut taxes. (= the government acting as one body)

Police and **people** are always followed by a **plural** verb.

The police have arrested a man for the murder.

The people are waiting for information about the delay.

We say **police officer** to refer to an individual member of the police force.

Two police officers appeared before the court.

Noun phrases using a ... of

You can modify countable and uncountable nouns with expressions such as *a kind of, a sort of, a type of, a bit of, a piece of, a lot of*:

A bowler is a kind of hat.

A penguin is a type of bird.

I need a bit of time.


TIP Often a specific expression collocates with a specific noun: *a loaf of bread, a slice of lemon, a glass of water, a can of beans.*

1 Seven sentences have one incorrect word (x). Three sentences are correct (✓). Cross out the incorrect words and write them correctly.


- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 How much baggages do you have with you?
<u>baggage</u> | 6 DVDs are really cheap at this store.
..... |
| 2 That's a nice watch. ✓ | 7 Would you like some drink?
..... |
| 3 A lot of snows fell last night.
..... | 8 Sorry, I don't have any gossips for you today.
..... |
| 4 My glasses needs mending.
..... | 9 Do you have an information about the castle?
..... |
| 5 Goggles must be worn at all time.
..... | 10 Three coffees, please. |

2 Match the expressions on the left to the nouns on the right. Then write the phrases beneath the pictures.

a type of	a loaf of	a piece of	lemon	cards	soup
a can of	a pack of	a slice of	bread	cake	insect

1 a slice of lemon 

2 
.....

3 
.....

4 
.....

5 
.....

6 
.....

3 Underline the correct verb form, singular or plural, in italics. In one sentence, both forms are possible.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Be careful. These stairs <i>is</i> / <i>are</i> very steep. | 5 Your scissors <i>cut</i> / <i>cuts</i> really well. |
| 2 A pinch of salt <i>help</i> / <i>helps</i> the taste. | 6 My team <i>isn't</i> / <i>aren't</i> very good. They lose every match. |
| 3 Your advice <i>is</i> / <i>are</i> always very helpful. | 7 The police <i>haven't</i> / <i>hasn't</i> arrested anyone yet. |
| 4 How well <i>do</i> / <i>does</i> your pants fit? | |

4 Read the pairs of sentences and match them to the correct responses (A or B).

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 I'd like an orange juice, please. <u>B</u> | A Sorry, we've sold out. We're waiting for a delivery. |
| 2 I'd like a carton of orange juice, please. <u>A</u> | B With ice? |
| 3 I've baked the cakes. | A Let's try one. |
| 4 There's some cake left. | B OK. I'll have some with my tea. |
| 5 Do I have to wear a safety helmet? | A Yes, at all times. |
| 6 Shall I wear this as well? Does it go with my necklace? | B Yes, but hurry up. We don't have much time. |