

PET COMMON WRITING MISTAKES 7

Are these nouns countable or uncountable?

1. Circle the correct alternatives below.

Example: Aida has very long hair / a very long hair.

1. Najeeb has done several works / jobs in his life.
2. There's lots of food in the fridge / There are lots of foods in the fridge so help yourself.
3. Hank eats three large meal / meals a day.
4. I want to give you some advice / advices.
5. Odile enjoys playing game / games.

2. Read the rules 1–6 and then match them to the examples a–f. Then use the rules to check your answers to Exercise 1.

1. Most nouns have a singular and a plural form:

a a chair

2. However, some nouns only have a singular form. These nouns are called 'uncountable' nouns because you cannot count them. Here are some uncountable nouns which intermediate learners often make plural:

b advice, countryside, entertainment, food, fruit, furniture, hair, homework, information, music, popcorn, scenery, stuff, trouble, work, exercise, experience

3. Use a with countable nouns when they are singular:

c The room had little furniture in it. Do you need any information?

4. You can use many, few, a lot of, some and any when countable nouns are plural:

d He has brown hair (not a brown hair).

5. Do not use a with uncountable nouns:

e house – houses, man – men, child – children, chair – chairs

6. You can use much, little, a lot of, some and any with uncountable nouns:

f many years, some trees.

3. Five of the sentences below contain mistakes made by intermediate students

Two sentences are correct (✓). Find and correct the mistakes.

work (or jobs)

Example: *I have to leave early because I have a lot of ~~works~~ to do at home.*

1. It's important to eat lots of fruits with your meals.
2. The hotel provides its guests with free entertainments.
3. We asked the tourist office to give us information about places to visit.
4. I enjoy listening to many different kinds of music.
5. The palace was full of expensive furnitures.
6. Pablo is always getting into troubles with his teachers.
7. Kostas gave us lots of advices about where to stay and what to do.

ANSWERS

1.
1 jobs
2 There's lots of food in the fridge
3 meals
4 advice
5 games

2.
2 b
3 a
4 f
5 d
6 c

3.
1 fruits fruit
2 entertainments entertainment
3 ✓
4 ✓
5 furnitures furniture
6 troubles trouble
7 advices advice