



Word-Classes in E4AWP:

1. NOUNS

Features of Nouns in E4AWP

**** part 2 ****

✧ countable and/or uncountable nouns:

Countable nouns [C]	Uncountable nouns [U]
✓ have singular and plural forms	✓ <u>only</u> have one form
✓ take singular and plural verbs	✓ <u>always</u> take a singular verb
✓ can have <i>a/an</i> (= indefinite article) and numbers in front of them	✓ <u>never</u> have <i>a/an</i> or a number directly in front of them
✓ have <i>many / a lot of / lots of / several</i> in front of them	✓ have <i>much / a lot of / lots of / several</i> in front of them
✓ have <i>few / a few</i> in front of them	✓ have <i>little / a little</i> in front of them
✓ have <i>some / any / no</i> in front of them (plural forms)	✓ have <i>some / any / no</i> in front of them

It can be useful to list uncountable nouns into the following categories:

- ✓ **substances**: *blood, corn, glass, iron, gold, oil, oxygen, plasma, plastic, water, wax, wheat, wood, etc.*;
- ✓ **abstract ideas**: *access, freedom, health, humour, progress, relevance, safety, etc.*;
- ✓ **weather conditions**: *fog, frost, hail, lightning, rain, snow, etc.*;
- ✓ **verbal nouns (i.e. -ing verbal forms used as nouns)**: *contact tracing, neutering, passing, rendering, shedding¹, social distancing, spaying,*

¹ Viral **shedding** refers to the expulsion and release of virus progeny following successful reproduction during a host-cell infection. Once replication has been completed and the host cell is exhausted of all resources in

- timing*, etc. as well as all the nouns indicating the various acts of parturition (see 1. *Notes on Nouns in E4BT_part 1*, page 3, footnote 2);
- ✓ **diseases**: *BSE, chickenpox, cold, coronavirus, Covid-19, diabetes, fever, FMD, hepatitis, influenza, leishmaniosis, malaria, measles, rabies, rubella, salmonellosis, SARS, smallpox*, etc.;
 - ✓ **subjects**: *biology, biotechnology, chemistry, etiology, mathematics / maths, physics, statistics*, etc.;
 - ✓ **other words**: *accommodation, advertising, advice, damage, equipment, evidence, exposure, hardware, information, money, news, research, software, traffic, training, transport, travel, weather*, etc.

HOW TO QUANTIFY UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS

In order to make countable quantities of uncountable nouns, you can choose among the following **three solutions** according to the message that needs to be conveyed in that specific context:

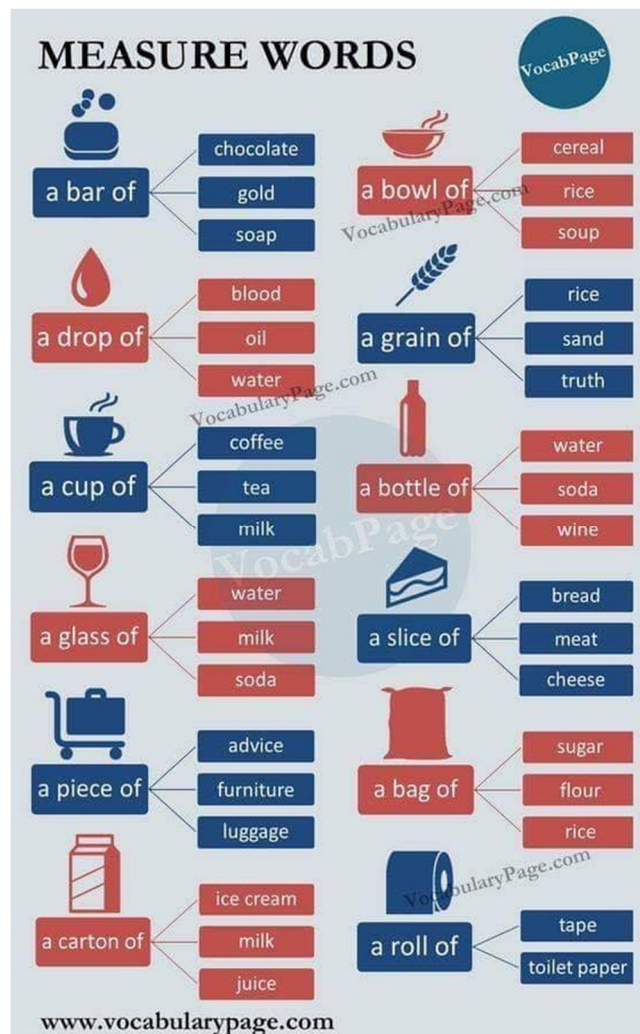
1. a periphrastic formula “a/an [C-noun] of” can be used:

- blood [U-noun] → a drop of blood; two sacks of blood; six phials of blood, three test-tubes of blood, a litre/liter of blood ...
- cattle [collective noun] → 100 head of cattle; a herd of cattle ...
- corn [U-noun] → 100 sheaves / ears of corn; a field of corn ...
- DNA → two strands of DNA ...
- evidence [U-noun] → a body of evidence / a piece of evidence / two items of evidence
- fever / pyrexia [U-noun] → bouts of fever; ... 37°C of fever
- glue [U-noun] → a tube of glue ...
- hair [U-noun] → a lock / wisp of hair; ...
- hepatitis [U-noun] → three types of hepatitis; ...
- information [U-noun] → two pieces / items of information; ...
- livestock [collective noun] → 6 head of livestock; a herd of livestock ...

making viral progeny, the viruses may begin to leave the cell by several methods. The term is used to refer to shedding from a single cell, shedding from one part of the body into another part of the body, and shedding from bodies into the environment where the viruses may infect other bodies. **Equivalents in Italian**: “shedding virale”, “rilascio di un virus”.

- neutering /spaying [U-noun] → six surgeries of neutering / spaying; ...
- news [U-noun] → an item / a piece of news; three items / pieces of news ...
- physics [U-noun] → ten books / chapters / exercises / formulae / pages / of physics; two laws of physics; ...
- research [U-noun] → four items / pieces of research; ...
- RNA → three types of RNA ...
- wheat [U-noun] → 21 bunches of wheat; ...

Apart from “an item of ...” and “a piece of ...” that can be used with most U-nouns, each U-noun needs an adequate periphrasis in accordance with the contexts where it is used.



MEASURE WORDS

a grain of	sand rice salt
a bottle of	water soda wine
a piece of	advice furniture luggage
a cup of	coffee tea milk
a slice of	bread meat cheese

Why do we use measure words?

We don't make uncountable nouns into plurals, but we still need a way to quantify/count them.

That's why we use measure words!

We can use a measure word to count or quantify an uncountable noun!

~~✗ I'm going on vacation.
I'm taking two luggages.~~

✓ I'm going on vacation.
I'm taking two pieces of luggage.

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2. a similar word (= a countable synonym):

- advice → suggestions; hints; tips; ...
- exposure → contacts; ...
- information → data; details; facts; figures; ...
- news → accounts; press releases; reports; ...
- progress → advances; improvements; a step forward; ...
- research → analyses; investigations; studies; ...
- work → a job; a task; ...

3. a compound noun (see “Compounding in E4AWP”, Unit 5, a.y. 2023/2024)

- blood → a blood clot; a blood test; blood vessels; blood bags; a blood sack; ...
- cattle → a cattle farm; a cattle market; cattle breeders; ...
- Covid-19 → two Covid-19 symptoms; four Covid-19 variants; a Covid-19 vaccine; ...
- DNA → a DNA sample; DNA tests; DNA strands ...
- exposure → exposure levels; ...
- malaria → two malaria cases; malaria parasites; malaria victims; ...
- morbidity → morbidity rates

- oxygen → two oxygen molecules; ten oxygen tanks; oxygen indicators; ...
- rendering → a rendering process, ...
- maintenance /'meɪntənəns/ → a maintenance host², ...
- research → a research project; research facilities; research methods; research findings; ...
- surveillance /sɜ:'veɪləns/ → surveillance devices / tools; surveillance reports / systems / processes / procedures; ...
- training → a training course/session; ...

Moreover, note that:

1. some words can be used in **two different ways** – **one countable, one uncountable** (e.g.: *analysis, business, contagion, glass, infection, hair, medicine, meal, paper, time, work* and so on);
2. **collective nouns** can take singular and plural verbs (e.g.: *board, committee, government, team; cattle, flock, herd, livestock, offspring, poultry, wildlife* or *wild fauna*³, and so on); and, while *cattle, livestock, offspring, poultry, wildlife* and *wild fauna* are collective nouns only and only have one form, most of them (e.g.: *board, committee, government, herd, team* and so on) are considered regular C-nouns, thus having a plural form of their own.

² A **maintenance host** is defined as a species in which infection is endemic and is usually transferred from animal to animal by direct contact. **Equivalent in Italian:** “ospite di mantenimento”.

Compare such a concept with **reservoir** /'rezəvwa:(r)/ **host:** an organism that harbors a pathogen but suffers no ill effects. However, it serves as a source of infection to other species that are susceptible, with important implications for disease control. A single reservoir host may be reinfected several times. **Equivalent in Italian:** “ospite serbatoio”; synonyms of **reservoir** in this sense: **carrier; vector**.

³ **Equivalents in Italian:** “fauna selvatica”, “animali selvatici”.