

## Unit 70 Countable nouns with a/an and some

Nouns can be *countable* or *uncountable*. For *uncountable* nouns see [Unit 69](#).

**a** Countable nouns are, for example:

dog umbrella job suggestion girl

Countable nouns are things we can count. We can make them plural:

two dogs six jobs some girls many suggestions

**b** Before singular countable nouns you can use *a/an*:

- That's **a** good suggestion.
- Do you need **an** umbrella?

You cannot use singular countable nouns alone (without *a/the/my* etc.):

- I'm looking for **a** job. (*not* 'I'm looking for job')
- Be careful of **the** dog. (*not* 'Be careful of dog')
- I've got **a** headache.
- Would you like **a** cigarette?

For *a/an* and *the* see [Unit 71](#).

**c** We often use *a/an* + noun when we say what something/someone is, or what something/someone is like:

- A dog is **an** animal.
- This is **a** really beautiful house.
- What is **a** lovely dress!
- Tom is **a** very nice person.
- Jack has got **a** big nose.

Remember to use *a/an* for jobs:

- Tom's father is **a** doctor. (*not* 'Tom's father is doctor')
- I wouldn't like to be **an** English teacher.

In sentences like these, we use plural countable nouns alone (*not* with *some*):

- Tom's parents are **very nice people**.  
(*not* 'some very nice people')
- Ann has got **blue eyes**.
- What **awful shoes!**
- **Dogs are animals**.
- **Are most of your friends students?**

**d** We also use *some* with plural countable nouns. *Some* = *a number of* / *a few of* (but we don't know or say exactly how many):

- I've seen **some** good films recently. (*not* 'I've seen good films')
- **Some** friends of mine are coming to stay at the week-end.

Do not use *some* when you are talking about things in general:

- I love **bananas**. (*not* 'some bananas')

Sometimes you can use *some* or leave it out:

- There are (**some**) eggs in the fridge if you're hungry.

For *some* and *any* see [Unit 84](#).