Countable Nouns

**Countable nouns** refer to things that we can count. Such nouns can take either *singular* or *plural* form and include *concrete, collective,* and *proper nouns.*

- **Countable:** There are a dozen **flowers** in the vase.
- **Collective:** London is home to several **orchestras**.
- **Proper:** There are many **Greeks** living in New York.

(Note: Not all proper nouns may be countable.)

Only **countable nouns** can be used with the indefinite article *a/an.* If a **countable noun** is singular, it always takes an article, either definite (*the*) or indefinite (*a/an*). When a **countable noun** is plural, it takes the definite article if it refers to a specific group and no article if it is used in a general sense.

- The **guest** of honor arrived late.
- You are welcome as **a guest** in our home.
- The **guests** at your party yesterday made a lot of noise.

Uncountable Nouns

**Uncountable nouns** refer to things that we cannot count. Such nouns take only singular form.

Abstract nouns are uncountable.

- The price of **freedom** is constant vigilance.

Some concrete nouns are uncountable.

- The price of **oil** has stabilized recently.

**Uncountable nouns** never take the indefinite article. **The** is sometimes used with uncountable nouns in the same way it is used with plural countable nouns, that is, to refer to a specific *object, group,* or *idea.*

- **Information** is a precious commodity in our computerized world.
- **The information** in your files is correct.
- **Sugar** has become more expensive recently.

Please pass me **the sugar.**

**Note:** The word *fewer* is used with **countable** nouns; the word *less* is used with **noncountable** nouns.