

## **Countable and Uncountable Nouns in IELTS Speaking and Writing** **Countable and uncountable nouns in IELTS Speaking Part One**

*Take turns asking two questions from two sections below.*

### **Accommodation/ Local area**

Do you live in a house or a flat?

Do you have enough space in the place where you are living?

Do you have many ornaments in your home?

Do you have any furniture that you'd like to get rid of?

### **Arts and media**

Do you read any newspapers?

What kind of news is most interesting to you?

### **Books/ Literature/ Writing**

Do you read many novels?

Do you generally prefer fiction or non-fiction?

What different types of writing do you do?

Do you like to write stories or poems?

### **Education/ Studies**

Do you need any qualifications for your career?

Is there any training which you would like to take?

Did you have much homework when you were in primary school?

Do you generally get stressed in exams?

Do you do a lot of revision before examinations?

### **English**

Do you attend any regular English lessons?

How much time do you spend studying English every week?

### **Family and friends**

Do you know your distant relations well?

How much time do you spend with your extended family?

### **Festivals and celebrations**

Which are your favourite festivals or celebrations?

On what occasions do you usually buy and drink champagne?

### **Food, drink and cooking**

Do you enjoy cooking?

Have you learnt any recipes from your family?

### **Free time**

Do you have much free time?

Where do you like to spend your days off?

What do you do for relaxation?

Are there any new hobbies which you'd like to take up?

**Gifts**

Is gift-giving important for people your age in your country?  
When did you last give or receive a present?

**Health and fitness**

Do you do much (physical) exercise?  
Do you take any supplements?

**Hometown**

Is there nice scenery in or near your hometown?

**Music**

Do you prefer to buy CDs or to download music from the internet?

**Shopping**

Do you enjoy finding bargains in the summer sales?  
Do you do much window shopping?

**Technology and the internet**

Do you spend much money on technology?  
Have you bought any new gadgets recently?  
Did you spend much time playing computer games when you were younger?  
Have you ever paid for some expensive software or apps?

**Transport and travel**

Do you enjoy overseas travel?  
How would you feel if you had regular business trips?  
Are there good public transport connections near where you are living?  
Is public transport expensive in your local area?  
Are there many cycle lanes in your hometown?  
Is parking a problem near where you live?

**TV**

Do you watch much TV?  
Are there any TV programmes which you really like?

**Weather**

Are there many storms, hurricanes, etc in your hometown?  
What kind of weather do you dislike?

**Work and studies**

How important is work to you?  
How many jobs have you had?  
Have you ever worked as a temp?

**Countable and uncountable grammar presentation**

*Without looking above, put -s after the only word in each section below which can take -s (= the countable noun). You can also check that the other noun can't take -s (because it is uncountable).*

flat  
space

furniture  
ornament

news  
newspaper

(non-)fiction  
novel

poem  
poetry/ writing

qualification  
training

assignment  
homework

exam/ examination/ test  
review/ revision

champagne  
festival

cooking  
recipe

day off  
free time/ leisure

hobby/ pastime  
relaxation

gift-giving  
present

bad habit  
(aerobic/ physical) exercise

nutrition



supplement/ vitamin

scenery  
view

music  
song/ track/ tune/ chorus/ verse

bargain/ summer sale  
window shopping

gadget  
technology

app/ application  
software

hour  
time

business trip/ journey  
travel

connection  
public transport/ transportation

cycle lane  
parking

storm/ hurricane/ typhoon/ cyclone/ shower  
weather/ wind/ snow/ rain

job/ (temporary) worker/ temp  
work/ overtime

*Check above.*

*Try to make generalisations about which kinds of words are usually uncountable.*

*Are these kinds of words usually countable or uncountable?*

- general categories
- specific things
- words ending in -ing

*Ask other questions about the same topics.*

**Brainstorming stage**

*Without looking above, write as many suitable countable and uncountable words as you can in each category below. Many words not above are also possible. Some words can be both countable and uncountable (with slightly or very different meanings), in which case you can put them in both columns.*

*Look at the questions, words and then answers above, and brainstorm more.*

*Compare your other answers with another group or as a class.*

<b>Countable with -s</b>	<b>Uncountable (= -s is wrong)</b>
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<b>Accommodation/ Local area</b>	
<b>Arts and media</b>	
<b>Books/ Literature/ Writing</b>	
<b>Education/ Studies</b>	
<b>English</b>	
<b>Family and friends</b>	
<b>Festivals and celebrations</b>	
<b>Food, drink and cooking</b>	
<b>Free time</b>	
<b>Health and fitness</b>	

<b>Hometown</b>	
<b>Music</b>	
<b>Shopping</b>	
<b>Technology and the internet</b>	
<b>Transport and travel</b>	
<b>TV</b>	
<b>Weather</b>	
<b>Work and studies</b>	



**Countable and uncountable in IELTS Speaking Part Three and Writing Part Two**

*Write -s next to the one line of countable nouns in each section below. You can check by making sure that the noun or nouns on the other line are uncountable by adding an -s and checking that they sound wrong.*

**Differences in grammar section**

advice

recommendation/ suggestion/ tip

evidence

figure

research

researcher

academic literature

academic paper

importance

priority

aim/ goal/ purpose

progress

disadvantage

extent

argument against

consensus

support for this position

supporter

effectiveness

measure

reality

solution

logic

reason

popularity

young person

justice

law



legislation  
regulation

my (partial) agreement  
position/ view

bureaucracy  
bureaucrat/ civil servant/ public servant

fact  
information

article  
news

concept  
understanding

### **Topics**

advertising  
ad/ advert/ advertisement/ commercial

education  
course/ class

recyclable bottle  
recycling

bin/ trash can/ garbage can  
rubbish/ trash/ garbage/ litter/ waste

exercise  
sports facility

obesity/ weight  
lift weight

factory/ plant  
pollution

forest  
deforestation

hospital fee  
medical spending



motor vehicle  
traffic

congestion  
traffic jam

diversity  
diverse background

accident/ crash  
road safety

health  
pill/ tablet

foreign aid  
subsidy

knowledge  
skill

DNA  
gene

good idea  
well-being

negative effect  
stress

secondary education  
secondary school

bank  
wealth

journey  
travelling

employment  
employer

cooperation  
individual

adolescent/ teenager  
immaturity



(job) satisfaction  
workplace

feedback  
positive comment/ remark

fun  
positive attitude

specialist  
specialisation

illegal act  
illegality

foreign language  
foreign language acquisition

creature  
wildlife

manufacturer  
manufacturing

entertainer  
entertainment

### **Similar grammar section**

*The ones in each section below have the same grammar. Either add -s to all the examples in a section if it is countable or check that none of the nouns can take -s if you think that section is uncountable.*

academic journal/ essay  
academic/ expert

advantage  
after-school activity

alcohol  
equality

alternative  
ancestor

(counter)argument  
(negative/ positive) aspect



asset  
cause

circumstance/ situation  
conclusion/ summary

consequence  
drawback

example  
fine

(previous) generation  
graduate

implication  
medium

middle-aged man  
option

paragraph  
peer

penalty  
positive development

privacy  
stability

quotation  
result

selling point  
side of the argument

subject/ topic  
toddler

**Singular, plural and uncountable in IELTS Writing Part One**

*In each section below only one line has a noun or noun that is countable and therefore can take -s. Write -s anywhere it can go below, making sure that the other line is wrong with -s each time.*

**Different grammar section****Process tasks/ Flowchart tasks**

equipment

machine

progress

step/ stage

heat/ (central) heating

heater

refrigerator/ fridge

refrigeration

cement

grinder

clay

clay pot

concrete

concrete block

grain of sand

sand

gravel

small stone

**Map tasks**

building

construction

bridge

infrastructure

access

road

transport

transport link



car park  
parking

grass  
sports field

farmland  
garden

greenery  
tree

housing  
retirement home

river  
water

countryside  
suburb

beach  
coastline

(foot)path  
paving

### **Line graphs and bar charts**

axis  
stability/ regularity

acceleration/ deceleration  
bar/ line

levelling off  
plateau/ (all-time/ new) high/ peak

boom  
growth

### **Pie charts**

pie chart/ segment  
market share

### **Other kinds of tasks/ General**

diagram/ chart  
information



**For specific topics**

dollar  
income

pound  
spending

heat  
temperature

gram/ tonne  
weight

consumer  
consumption

mode of transport  
transport

questionnaire/ survey  
research

carbon (dioxide)  
carbon emission

energy consumption  
power station

electricity  
unit of electricity

fuel source  
heating fuel

nuclear power  
nuclear power station

coal  
lump of coal

barrel of oil  
petrol

natural gas  
pipeline



clothing  
item of clothing

telephone call  
time spent on the phone

beef  
kind of meat

household  
housework

hour of sunshine  
sunshine

visitor satisfaction  
visitor

cigarette  
tobacco

footwear  
shoe

insurance  
insurance policy

animal  
grazing



### Similar grammar section

*The ones below have ones of the same kind in each section. Identify if each section is all countable or all uncountable and add -s to those which can take it.*

#### Map

place  
location  
site  
entrance  
exit  
(main) gate  
block  
island  
peninsula  
rail  
railway  
track

#### Process

flowchart  
lifecycle  
larva  
system

#### Tables

column  
row  
figure/ statistic/ number

#### General

comparison  
forecast/ prediction/ projection  
gap  
main feature  
percentage  
period  
price  
quantity  
year  
trend