**COUNTABILITY**

**Countable Nouns**

Countable nouns are the names of separate objects, people , etc. which we can count.

**If a noun is countable:**

a) We can use **a/an** in front of it: a book, an envelope

b) It has a **plural** and can be used in the question How many?

How many stamps/envelopes? – Four stamps/envelopes

c) We can use **numbers**: one stamp, two stamps

**Uncountable Nouns** (also known as non-count nouns or mass nouns)

Uncountable nouns are the names of things which we do not see as separate, and which we

cannot count.

**If a noun is uncountable**

a) We **do not** normally use **a/an** in front of it:

Sugar is expensive.

b) It **does not** normally **have** a plural and it can be used in the question How much?

How much meat/oil? – A lot of meat/a little oil

c) We **cannot** normally use a number (one, two) in front of it.

Uncountable nouns are:

**abstract nouns:** beauty, courage, death, help, hope, horror, knowledge, pity

**names of materials**: beer, coffee, glass, stone, water, wine, wood

**some collective nouns:** furniture, jewelry, hair, money

These nouns are often preceded by **some, any, no, little, a little, etc. or by nouns such as bit, item, piece, slice, etc. + of:**

little water a little water

a bit of news a cake of soap

a drop of oil a grain of sand

a pane of glass a piece of advice

a pot of jam a sheet of paper

Note**: Sometimes material nouns and abstract nouns are used in the plural with emphatic force**

**sand the sands of the Sahara**

**water the waters of the Black sea**

Some uncountable nouns are used in the plural, when they denote particular varieties.

This region produces some awful wines as well as good ones.

I go out in all weathers.

Some uncountable nouns in the plural change their meaning:

damage (škoda) damages (odškodné)

good (dobro) goods (zboží)

force (síla) forces (ozbrojené síly)

honour (čest) honours (vyznamenání)

Some of these nouns, e.g. glass, paper, stone, etc. can be ‘countable’ in one context and, with

a different meaning, ‘uncountable’ in another.

When we use such nouns as countables, we refer to a thing which is made of the material or

which we think of as being made of the material; when we use them as uncountables, we

refer only to the material.

**countable (‘thing’) uncountable (‘material’)**

I broke **a glass** this morning.  **Glass** is made from sand.

Would you like **an ice**? **Ice** floats.

I’ve got **a new iron**. Steel is an alloy of **iron**.

What do the **papers** say? **Paper** is made from wood.

**Použitá literatura**

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