

# Improve your English for students

Alps Academy

<https://www.alps.academy/improve-english-chinese/>

# Collective Nouns

Alps Academy

## introduction

we have looked at plural nouns (student => students)  
and 'uncountable' nouns (rice, meat, coffee, etc.)

but if we do not use 1,2, 3 etc then what do we use?  
we use 'quantifiers'

There are special words for these types of nouns in a collective  
(more than one) - these are called collective nouns

## collective nouns

Collective nouns are used to define a group of people, animals or objects

collective nouns

1 banana

2 bananas

3 bananas

many bananas

a bunch of bananas



bunch is the collective noun

## collective nouns

1 bird

2 birds

3 birds

many birds

a flock of birds



**flock** is the collective noun

## collective nouns

1 person

2 people

3 people

many people

a crowd of people

*a group of people*

crowd is the collective noun

group is also a collective noun

# COUNTABLES



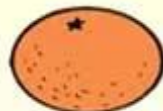
BUN



SANDWICH



APPLE



ORANGE



BURGER



FRIES



EGGS



SALAD



VEGETABLES



COOKIES



POTATOES



TOMATO



CARROT



HOT DOG



CANDIES



OLIVES



PEANUTS



PANCAKES



ONION



WATERMELON



PEA



GRAPES



CHEERIES

# UNCOUNTABLES



BREAD



FRUIT



JUICE



MEAT



RICE



CEREAL



JAM



MILK



COFFEE



SUGAR



FLOUR



OIL



SALT



SOUP



TEA



COTTAGE  
CHEESE



PASTA



HONEY



WATER



CHEESE



BUTTER



SEAFOOD



MUSTARD



# Food

the name of the container

- bag
- bowl
- cup
- glass
- jar
- plate
- spoon(ful)

a general term for the size

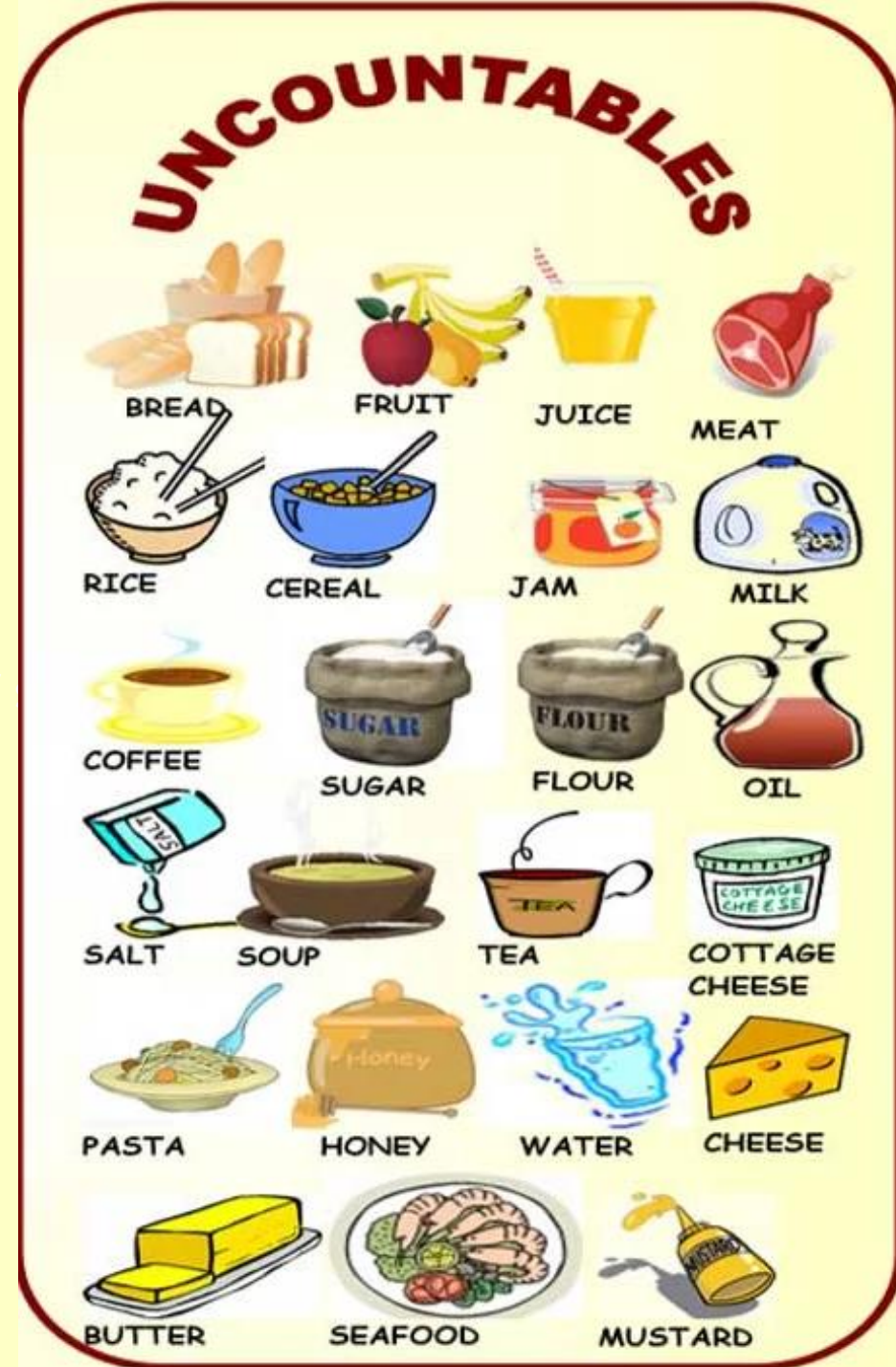
- piece
- slice

others

- pinch

A **bag** of flour  
A **bottle** of oil  
A **bowl** of rice  
A **bowl** of soup  
A **bowl** of cereal  
A **cup** of coffee  
A **cup** of tea  
A **glass** of milk  
A **glass** of water  
A **jar** of honey  
A **jar** of jam  
A **jar** of mustard  
A **piece** of cheese  
A **piece** of fruit  
A **piece** of meat  
A **pinch** of salt  
A **plate** of pasta  
A **plate** of seafood  
A **slice** of bread  
A **slice** of butter  
A **spoonful** of sugar

of



general (generic) terms often used

A group of \_\_\_\_\_

A pack of \_\_\_\_\_

A crowd of \_\_\_\_\_

A slice of \_\_\_\_\_

A piece of \_\_\_\_\_

A gang of \_\_\_\_\_

A collection of \_\_\_\_\_

A range of \_\_\_\_\_

A flock of \_\_\_\_\_

A herd of \_\_\_\_\_

A set of \_\_\_\_\_

these can be used  
for many types of  
collections

## general (generic) terms often used

A group of:

1. A group of friends
2. A group of students
3. A group of birds

A pack of:

1. A pack of wolves
2. A pack of cards
3. A pack of cigarettes

A crowd of:

1. A crowd of people
2. A crowd of fans
3. A crowd of protesters

A slice of:

1. A slice of pizza
2. A slice of cake
3. A slice of bread

A piece of:

1. A piece of advice
2. A piece of information
3. A piece of chocolate

A gang of:

1. A gang of criminals
2. A gang of bikers
3. A gang of kids

A collection of:

1. A collection of books
2. A collection of art
3. A collection of stamps

## general (generic) terms often used

1. A range of:
  1. A range of mountains
  2. A range of products
  3. A range of temperatures
2. A flock of:
  1. A flock of birds
  2. A flock of sheep
  3. A flock of geese
1. A herd of:
  1. A herd of elephants
  2. A herd of cattle
  3. A herd of deer
2. A set of:
  1. A set of tools
  2. A set of dishes
  3. A set of goals

# exercise #1

1. beans



4. & 5. chocolate



7. crisps



11. lemonade



15. rice



## Choose the correct quantifier

1. A can/bunch of beans
2. A piece/bowl of cake
3. A box/piece of cereal
4. A plate/piece of chocolate
5. A bowl/bar of chocolate
6. A chunk/can of coke
7. A bag/slice of crisps
8. A chunk/bunch of grapes
9. A plate/jar of honey
10. A bag/carton of juice
11. A slice/glass of lemonade
12. A piece/glass of milk
13. A bowl/slice of pizza
14. A cup/plate of tea
15. A slice/bowl of rice

3. cereal



6. coke



9. honey



12. milk



# listening exercise

## listen first

On a sunny weekend, friends visited a zoo to explore the animals. Their favourites were a pride of lions rested under a tree, a herd of elephants, a troop of monkeys and a pack of wolves.

Later, they ventured to a farm close by. Near a pond where a shoal of fish swam, there was a lot of noise from a gaggle of geese, although it didn't affect the flock of birds overhead, a flock of sheep or a herd of cows who carried on grazing peacefully. In the farm's garden, a swarm of bees buzzed around collecting nectar.

They also noticed an army of ants, carrying bits of food. To conclude the day, they visited a friend's house. On a previous visit, their friend's cat had a litter of kittens. This time, their friend's dog proudly presented a litter of puppies.



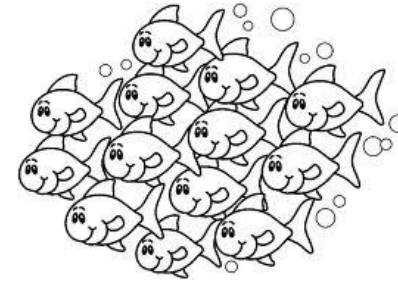


A **Colony** of Ants  
An **Army** of Ants



A S \_ \_ \_ \_ of Bees

## animal collective nouns



A \_ \_ \_ \_ of Fish  
A School of Fish



A F \_ \_ \_ \_ of Birds



A P \_ \_ \_ \_ of Lions



A H \_ \_ \_ of Cows



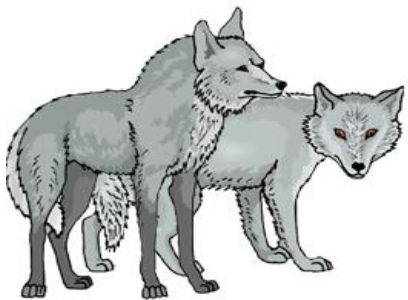
A H \_ \_ \_ of Elephants



A F \_ \_ \_ \_ of Sheep



A G \_ \_ \_ \_ of Geese



A P \_ \_ \_ of Wolves



A T \_ \_ \_ \_ of Monkeys



A L \_ \_ \_ \_ of Puppies



A L \_ \_ \_ \_ of Kittens

listen again

On a sunny weekend, friends visited a zoo to explore the animals. Their favourites were a pride of lions rested under a tree, a herd of elephants, a troop of monkeys and a pack of wolves.

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# exercise #2 & #3





Complete the collective nouns

A collection of **stamps**

A collection of \_\_\_\_\_

A bunch of \_\_\_\_\_

A bunch of \_\_\_\_\_

A bunch of \_\_\_\_\_

A bunch of \_\_\_\_\_

A flight of \_\_\_\_\_

A fleet of \_\_\_\_\_

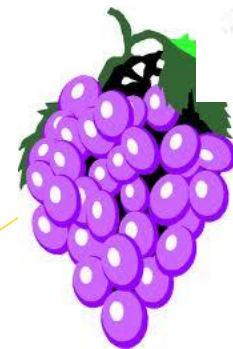
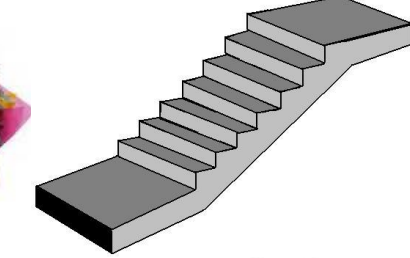
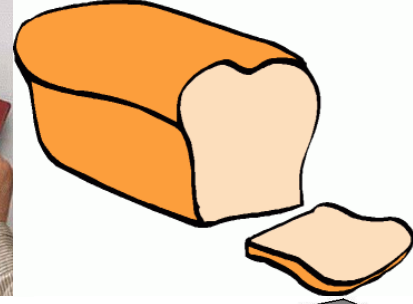
A pack of \_\_\_\_\_

A loaf of \_\_\_\_\_

A chest of **drawers**

A deck of **cards** [2]

A bouquet of **flowers** [2]



## collectable Nouns

**Complete the sentences with the right collective noun.**

ocfk      eeftl      edhr      aegnr      bchnu      aflo      abdor

1. Sue wants to visit a \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of mountains.
2. A \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of birds is gathering together by the lake.
3. The farmer is looking after the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of cows.
4. Matt went to the grocery to buy a \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of grapes.
5. The company bought a new \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of vans.
6. Cut a slice off the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of bread, please.
7. She gained a seat on the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of directors.

# speaking / pronunciation practice

common consonant clusters - -ing: as in “walking”

- walking
- talking
- listening
- dancing
- drinking
- playing
- reading
- running
- singing
- swimming
- sleeping

common consonant clusters - -ly: as in “quickly”

- quickly
- quietly
- happily
- carefully
- slowly
- sadly
- daily
- monthly
- honestly
- perfectly



common consonant clusters - -ble: as in “table”

- table
- able
- fable
- durable
- edible
- bible
- liable
- manageable
- incredible
- plausible

common consonant clusters - -ple: as in “apple”

- apple
- simple
- sample
- ample
- triple
- multiple
- staple
- couple
- people
- principle

common consonant clusters - -nd: as in "end," "friend," "beyond."

- end
- friend
- hand
- sand
- mind
- kind
- find
- sound
- round
- beyond

common consonant clusters - -nt: as in "went," "sent," "want."

- sent
- went
- want
- silent
- different
- ancient
- constant
- brilliant
- violent
- excellent

common consonant clusters - -rt: as in "part," "heart," "smart."

- part
- heart
- smart
- chart
- apart
- art
- port
- sport
- report
- support

common consonant clusters - -st: as in "best," "fast," "test."

- best
- west
- east
- fast
- first
- test
- rest
- just
- trust
- dust

common consonant clusters - -lt: as in "felt," "salt," "cult."

- felt
- salt
- jolt
- fault
- adult
- cult
- melt
- felt
- smelt
- quilt

common consonant clusters - -ft: as in "left," "craft," "draft."

- left
- lift
- gift
- craft
- draft
- loft
- left
- swift
- sift
- soft



common consonant clusters - -pt: as in "kept," "slept," "except."

- slept
- accept
- except
- kept
- swept
- script
- prompt
- adopt
- disrupt
- attempt

common consonant clusters - -ct: as in "fact," "strict," "exact."

- fact
- act
- exact
- strict
- direct
- select
- correct
- contact
- collect
- expect

common consonant clusters - -mp: as in "jump," "dump," "lump."

- jump
- dump
- lump
- pump
- bump
- stamp
- tramp
- cramp
- camp
- swamp

common consonant clusters - -sk: as in "ask," "disk," "brisk."

- ask
- task
- flask
- risk
- disk
- brisk
- whisk
- husk
- dusk
- rusk

## practice sounds in English

Course #1

<https://www.alps.academy/english-pronunciation-practice/>

### What would you like to learn?

- reading practice exercises
- practice conversations
- pronunciation practice



/ɔɪ/ – as in “boy”

- boy
- toy
- joy
- coin
- noise
- voice
- choice
- enjoy
- join
- boil

/aɪ/ – as in “bike”

- bike
- like
- time
- fine
- five
- fly
- night
- high
- right
- sky

/ə/ – as in “sofa” (start)

- about
- alone
- among
- alive
- adore
- arrive
- aside
- abandon
- afford
- accuse

/ə/ – as in “sofa” (end)

- extra
- cinema
- drama
- data
- idea
- mama
- opera
- banana
- comma
- drama

### Consonant Sounds in English

/m/ – as in “mat”

- map
- mom
- man
- mud
- mop

/n/ – as in “nut”

- nap
- net
- not
- nose
- nut

/p/ – as in “pat”

- pen
- pig
- pot
- pop
- pat

/t/ – as in “top”

- tip
- tap
- tom
- tent
- tan

# listening practice

## Nina Simone - Feeling Good

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHRNrgDIJfo>

Select the correct words to  
complete the lyrics of the song

birds	breeze
butterflies	dragonfly
fish	freedom
river	scent
sea	sky
sleep	stars
sun	tree

Birds flying high, you know how I feel  
\_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_, you know how I feel  
\_\_\_\_\_ drifting on by, you know how I feel  
It's a new dawn, it's a new day, it's a new life for me

Yeah, it's a new dawn, it's a new day, it's a new life for me  
And I'm feeling good

\_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_, you know how I feel  
\_\_\_\_\_ running free, you know how I feel  
Blossom on the \_\_\_\_\_, you know how I feel  
It's a new dawn, it's a new day, it's a new life for me  
And I'm feeling good

\_\_\_\_\_ out in the sun, you know what I mean, don't you know  
\_\_\_\_\_ all having fun, you know what I mean  
\_\_\_\_\_ in peace when day is done: that's what I mean  
And this old world is a new world and a bold world for me

\_\_\_\_\_ when you shine, you know how I feel  
\_\_\_\_\_ of the pine, you know how I feel  
Oh, \_\_\_\_\_ is mine, and I know how I feel  
It's a new dawn, it's a new day, it's a new life for me

And I'm feeling... good



vocabulary



## idioms

### what is an idiom?

a group of words when used together have a different meaning than the individual words

- ‘under the weather’
- ‘raining cats and dogs’

## common idioms

- jump the gun
- kill two birds with one stone
- under the weather
- spill the beans / don't spill the beans
- bite your tongue
- keep your chin up
- hit the books

source: <https://www.alps.academy/idiom-examples-exercises/>

## common idiom definitions

- **Jump the gun:** to do something too soon, before the right time
- **Hit the books:** to study or do homework
- **Keep your chin up:** to remain positive and not get down during difficult times
- **Kill two birds with one stone:** to do two things at the same time
- **Under the weather:** feeling unwell
- **Don't spill the beans:** do not reveal the secret information
- **Bite your tongue:** to stop yourself from speaking

## common idiom example sentences

- Tommy **jumped the gun** and started eating his dessert before finishing his dinner.
- Sarah has a big test tomorrow, so she needs to **hit the books** tonight to prepare.
- Even though he lost the game, Tim **kept his chin up** and congratulated the winner.
- Mom decided to go grocery shopping on her way home from work to **kill two birds with one stone**.
- Jenny stayed home from school today because she's feeling a bit **under the weather**.
- Tina promised her friend she wouldn't **spill the beans** about the surprise party.
- Even though he was angry, Jack decided to **bite his tongue** and not say anything hurtful.

## common idiom example conversations

- **Samantha:** “I can’t wait for the pizza to arrive. Can I have a slice now?” **Mom:** “Not yet, Samantha. Let’s wait for everyone to sit down first. Don’t jump the gun!”
- **Johnny:** “I have a spelling test tomorrow, but I want to play video games.” **Dad:** “Johnny, you need to hit the books and study for your test before you can play.”
- **Amy:** “I lost my favorite toy at the park today.” **Friend:** “Don’t be sad, Amy. Keep your chin up. Maybe we can look for it together tomorrow.”
- **Mom:** “We need to buy bread for sandwiches and milk for cereal. Let’s go to the grocery store.” **Sarah:** “Can we also get some apples for my snack? That way we can kill two birds with one stone.”
- **Teacher:** “Tommy, you look tired today. Are you feeling okay?” **Tommy:** “Not really, Teacher. I’m feeling a little under the weather.”
- **Sara:** “I have a surprise gift for Mom’s birthday!” **Brother:** “Shh, Sara! Don’t spill the beans. It’s a secret!”
- **Dad:** “Mom made broccoli for dinner tonight, and I don’t like it.” **Mom:** “Dad, remember to bite your tongue. We should try new foods and be polite.”

# exercise #1

1. I have a headache today and feel a little dizzy, so I'm (**under the weather** / hitting the books).
2. When you are taking a test, it's important to (keep your chin up / spill the beans) and do your best.
3. If you want to finish two tasks at the same time, you can (jump the gun / kill two birds with one stone).
4. When you want to say something but it might hurt someone's feelings, it's better to \_\_\_\_\_ (bite your tongue / hit the books) instead.
5. My sister loves to talk and sometimes she (jumps the gun / spills the beans) about surprises before they happen.
6. If you are feeling sad, it's important to (keep your chin up / kill two birds with one stone) and find things that make you happy.
7. When you have a secret, it's important to (bite your tongue / hit the books) and not tell anyone.

# exercise #2



## Complete the Sentence with the Correct Idiom

Fill in the blanks

1. I'm feeling a bit \_\_\_\_\_ today, so I think I'll stay home and rest.
2. If you want to finish your homework quickly and have time to play, try to \_\_\_\_\_ and do your chores at the same time.
3. My mom told me not to \_\_\_\_\_ and tell my brother about his surprise party.
4. When you want to say something, but it might hurt someone's feelings, it's better to \_\_\_\_\_ instead.
5. If you're feeling down, try to \_\_\_\_\_ and think positively.
6. When you have a big test coming up, it's important to \_\_\_\_\_ and study hard.
7. During a race, if you start running before the signal, you will \_\_\_\_\_ and get disqualified.

# extra exercise

*(optional)*

**Choose 3 idioms and give examples of use**

Give an example of a situation where someone might need to:

- jump the gun
- bite your tongue
- keep their chin up
- kill two birds with one stone
- hit the books

**Example:** starting to build a house before the land has been properly surveyed and approved for building (this is jumping the gun)

if you wish to complete more exercises

exercises from:

<https://www.alps.academy/idiom-examples-exercises/>

idiom exercises:

<https://www.alps.academy/learn-english-idioms/>

reading comprehension:

<https://www.alps.academy/simple-reading-comprehension-questions-for-students/>

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of yellow and gold, creating a modern, layered effect. The shapes are primarily triangular and polygonal, with some areas appearing more translucent than others.

**Thank you!**  
any questions?