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Noun

Nouns are an important part of speech in English, probably second only to verbs. It is difficult to say much without using a noun.

A noun is a word that refers **a person, place ,thing, names or idea.**

Another way of recognizing a noun is by its ending, position and function.

1. Noun ending

There are certain word endings that show that a word is a noun, for example:

- -ity → nationality
- -ment → appointment
- -ness → happiness
- -ation → relation
- -hood → childhood

But this is not true for the word endings of all nouns. For example, the noun "spoonful" ends in -ful, but the adjective "careful" also ends in -ful.

2. Position in sentence

We can often recognize a noun by its position in the sentence.

Nouns often come after a determiner (a determiner is a word like a, an, the, this, my, such):

- a relief
- an afternoon
- the doctor
- this word

Nouns often come after one or more adjectives

- a great relief
- a peaceful afternoon
- the tall, Indian doctor
- this difficult word
- my brown and white house

3. Function in a sentence

Nouns have certain functions (jobs) in a sentence, for example:

- **subject of verb:** Doctors work hard.
- **object of verb:** He likes coffee.
- **subject and object of verb:** Teachers teach students.

But the subject or object of a sentence is not always a noun. It could be a pronoun or a phrase. In the sentence "My doctor works hard", the noun is "doctor" but the subject is "My doctor".

Types of Nouns

There are several different types of English nouns. It is often useful to recognize what type a noun is because different types sometimes have different rules. This helps you to use them correctly.

1- Common Nouns

A common noun is a name for a type of thing, person, species... etc. which denotes a general name for something. Usually, common nouns are not capitalized unless they begin a sentence.

Common nouns refer to people, places and things **in general** like **chair** or **dog**.

Examples: teacher, car, music.

- Have you seen **my dog**?
- **The books** are on your desk.
- He is the tallest **boy** in our *class*.

2-Proper Nouns

A proper noun is a specific name for a person, place, or thing.

Proper nouns are **almost always capitalized**. This is true whether they begin a sentence or not.

Names of people, places or organizations are proper nouns. Your name is a proper noun. London is a proper noun. United Nations is a proper noun.

Examples: Ahmed, Suha, Thailand, Sunday

- Let me introduce you to **Mary**.
- The capital of **Iraq** is **Baghdad**.
- I was born in **November**.

Note: Adjectives that we make from proper nouns also usually start with a capital letter, for example **Shakespearian**.

More examples of the difference between common and proper nouns:

- My favorite **newspaper** (common noun) is ***the Washington Post*** (proper noun).
- Her **husband** (common noun) is called ***Frank*** (proper noun).

3- Concrete Nouns

Concrete nouns are physical things that you can touch.

Examples: man, rice, head, car, furniture, mobile phone

- My father bought me the book
- The picture you painted of a tree is very pretty.

4- Abstract Nouns

Abstract nouns are the opposite of concrete nouns. They are things that you cannot touch. Abstract nouns are ideas, concepts and feelings.

Examples: happiness, courage, danger, truth

- Money doesn't buy happiness.
- Sometimes it takes courage to tell the truth.
- I'd like the freedom to travel all over the world

5- Countable Nouns

A countable noun is a thing can be numbered or counted like: dog, cat, animal, man, person.

Countable nouns can be singular or plural:

- My **dog** is playing.
- My **dogs** are hungry.

We can use the indefinite article **a/an** with countable nouns:

- A dog is **an** animal.

When a countable noun is singular, we must use a word like **a/the/my/this** with it:

- I want **an** orange. (*not* I want orange.)
- Where is **my** bottle? (*not* Where is bottle?)

When a countable noun is plural, we can use it alone:

- I like oranges.
- Bottles can break.

6- Uncountable Nouns

Uncountable nouns are for the things that we cannot count with numbers. (also called mass nouns)

Examples: water, cheese, advice, information, news, gas, power, rice.

- Can you give me **some information**?
- I need some drinking **water**.
- He gave me a good piece of **advice**.
 - We never use uncountable nouns with the indefinite article (**a/an**).
 - We usually treat uncountable nouns as **singular**. We use a singular verb.

For example:

This news **is** very important.

7- Collective Nouns

A collective noun is a noun that represents a **collection of individuals**, usually people, such as:

- a **team** (for example: eleven football players)
- a **family** (for example: mother, father and two children)
- **A fleet of ships.**

A collective noun refers to a group that is behaving in a singular way and therefore requires a singular verb. A plural noun refers to more than one person, place, or thing and requires the use of a plural verb.

- My family **was** happy.
- My family **were** happy .

8- Compound Nouns

A compound noun is a noun that is made with two or more words. Most compound nouns are [noun + noun] or [adjective + noun]. Each compound noun acts as a single unit and can be modified by adjectives and other nouns.

Compound nouns have three different forms:

1. open or spaced - space between words (**bus stop**)
2. hyphenated - hyphen between words (**mother-in-law**)
3. closed or solid - no space or hyphen between words (**football**)

Examples: cat food, blackboard, breakfast, sky clouds, washing machine, software.

- Shall we play **football** today?

Notes

- When the subject is singular, the verb must be singular as:
He has a new car.

She is pretty.

- When the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural as:

They have a new car.

They are pretty.