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This / That / These / Those

We use 'this / that / these / those' to show which things or people we mean.

We generally use 'this / that' to talk about one thing or person and 'these / those' to talk about more than one thing or person.

- Look at this car. (One car.)
- These cars are in the way. (More than one car.)
- That boy is my son. (One boy.)
- Do you know those boys. (More than one boy.)

We can use 'this / that / these / those' before a noun or alone, without a noun. Here are some examples without nouns.

- I'd like this, please.
- That is beautiful!
- Could I try these on?
- She wants those.

We usually use 'this / these' to talk about things or people that are close to us and 'that / those' to talk about things or people that are further away from us.

- This book (in my hand) is really good, but that book (on the table) is boring.

However, when we use this / that / these / those alone, we only use them to talk about things, not people.

- This child is hungry. (NOT: This is hungry.)

We can use 'this' and 'that' by themselves exceptionally to talk about people when we ask who the person is or say who the person is using their name. This happens when we introduce people and on the telephone. When we're on the telephone, in UK English, we use 'this' to say who we are and 'that' to talk about the other person.

- This is Julia. (Julia is speaking.)
- Who is that?



(If we use a pronoun like ‘me’ on the telephone, we use ‘it’ not ‘this’: It’s me. NOT: this is me.)

We can also use ‘this’ to introduce people to each other.

- Amanda, this is John.
- This is my friend Lucas.



Some and Any

We use 'some' and 'any' when we are thinking about a certain amount of something.

Usually both 'some' and 'any' can only be used with plural countable nouns or uncountable nouns, but not with singular countable nouns.

We often use 'some' with positive sentences and 'any' with negatives and questions.

- She bought some tomatoes [positive sentence].
- She didn't buy any tomatoes [negative sentence].
- Did she buy any tomatoes [question]?



A Little, A Few

We use 'a little' with uncountable nouns.

- I have a little money.

We use 'a few' with plural countable nouns.

- I have a few friends.

When we say 'a little' or 'a few', we mean a small amount. The sentence is usually neutral in feeling. We usually use 'a little' and 'a few' in positive sentences or questions where we expect that the answer will be yes.

- John: Let's go out tonight. Lucy: Okay. I have **a little** money, enough for the cinema at least.
- I have a few good friends. I'm happy.

Be careful, because 'little' is also an adjective.

- A little car = a small car (here 'little' is an adjective.)
- A little water = a small amount of water (here, 'little' is a determiner.)



Much, Many

We usually use 'much' and 'many' in negative sentences and questions. We don't use them with singular countable nouns.

We use much + uncountable nouns. The noun can have an adjective before it.

- I don't have much water.
- Do you have much free time?
- He doesn't earn much money.

We use many + plural, countable nouns. The noun can have an adjective before it.

- Does she have many friends?
- They don't read many books.
- Do you know many nice people here?

We use much / many + of + pronoun.

- I don't have many of those.
- Did you buy much of theirs?
- She didn't use much of it.

We use much / many + of + determiner + noun.

- Did you eat much of the chocolate?
- I don't have many of your books.
- He didn't wear many of these clothes.

We can use 'much' and 'many' alone if the meaning is clear.

- Did you eat much? (= Did you eat much dinner?)
- I don't have many. (= I don't have many plants.)



We can make questions using 'how much' and 'how many'.

- How much does it cost?
 - How much chocolate did he eat?
 - How much of our money did you spend?
-
- How many do you have?
 - How many brothers and sisters do you have?
 - How many of those books have you read?



A Lot of / Lots of

‘A lot of’ means exactly the same as ‘lots of’. We can always use either and it doesn’t change the meaning at all.

We can use ‘a lot of / lots of’ before uncountable nouns and plural nouns. We don’t use them with singular countable nouns.

- I ate lots of cake.
- I ate a lot of cake.

We also use ‘a lot of / lots of’ before pronouns and nouns with determiners.

- I ate a lot of it.
- I ate a lot of the cake.
- I ate lots of your chocolate.

When we use an uncountable noun with ‘lots of / a lot of’ as the subject, we use a singular verb.

- A lot of his money **is** in that bank account.

When we use a plural noun with ‘lots of / a lot of’ as the subject, we use a plural verb.

- A lot of her friends **are** in the UK.

We can use ‘a lot / lots’ without a noun if the meaning is clear. In this case, we don’t use ‘of’.

- She has some shoes but he has lots.
- I love coffee and I drink a lot.