

***Difference  
between a few  
and few***



- Using a few instead of few in a sentence changes a sentence's meaning. Whereas "a few" implies a small number of some that is greater than two, "few" implies only a small number. Other words, like "very" or "quite", may also come before "a few" or "few" and further change sentence meaning.



few



a few

# ◆ Few

positive quantity

- -4   -3   -2   -1
- 1   2   3   4

negative quantity

The word **few** represents a **negative quantity** or **shortage**.

# ◆ A few

# They both are used with countable noun.

□ *-a few* has positive meaning.  
It means a small amount of something, but it is enough.



□ *-few* has negative meaning.  
It means a small amount of something and it isn't still enough.



**Few** has a *negative* nuance and shows dissatisfaction:

"Few" without the preceding "a" connotes "an insignificantly small number"



**A few** has a *positive* nuance & shows satisfaction:



"A few" connotes "not an overwhelmingly large number, but not an insignificantly small number either."

# **Few** emphasises the lack of something:

- ▣ *There are few sweets left in the jar.*



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We should be careful not to eat them too quickly because they are almost gone.

**A few** emphasises that something still remains.

□ *I have a few sweets In the jar.*



This means that sweets is enough for me.



Asel has got **a few** strawberries.  
She can make some jam.



Bota has got **few** strawberries.  
She can't make any jam.



## FEW

'I have FEW books' expresses a negative idea  
- I'm not happy with the situation, I do NOT have ENOUGH books.

*"I have few friends." (and I'm lonely)*

## FEW



## A FEW

'I have A FEW books' expresses a positive idea  
- I'm happy with the situation.

*"I have a few friends." (and it's OK with me)*



- A few of the students are ready.



- Your homework has so few mistakes.

