

# *The noun*

## **Part 1**

# *Classification*

Nouns may be classified according to their:

- **morphological composition**  
(simple/derivative/compound)
- **meaning** (proper/common)
- **countability** (count/mass )

# NOUNS



## Simple

## Derivative

## Compound

**1. Simple** nouns are nouns which have neither prefixes nor suffixes. They are indecomposable: *chair, table, room, map, fish, work.*

**2 Derivative** nouns are nouns which have derivative elements (prefixes or suffixes or both): *read**er**, sail**or**, black**ness**, child**hood**, **mis**conduct, **in**experience.*

**3. Compound** nouns are nouns built from two or more stems: *apple-tree, shipwreck.*

# Typical **noun suffixes** are:

## a) NOUNS INDICATING *PERSONS*

- **-ER** as in *driv**er***, *employ**er***, *exam**in**er*
- **-OR**, instead of **-er**, as in *act**or***, *collect**or***, *edit**or***; *protect**or***, *sail**or***, *visit**or***;
- **-AR**, as in *begg**ar***, *liar*;
- **-ANT**, as in *assist**ant***, *attendant*, *servant*;
- **-IST**, as in *chem**ist***, *scient**ist***, *typ**ist***;
- **-EE**, as in *employ**ee***, *exam**inee***, *refer**ee*** (someone who is referred to), *refuge**ee*** (someone who is forced to take refuge);
- **-ESS**, as in *heir**ess***, *host**ess***

# Typical **noun suffixes** are:

## **b) ABSTRACT NOUNS DERIVED FROM VERBS**

- **-AGE**, *eg breakage, drainage, leakage*
- **-AL**, *eg approval, arrival, refusal*
- **-ANCE**, *eg acceptance, appearance, performance*
- **-ERY**, *eg delivery, discovery, recovery*
- **-MENT**, *eg agreement, arrangement, employment*
- **-SION**, *eg collision, decision, division*
- **-TION**, *eg education, organisation, attention, solution*
- **-URE**, *eg departure, failure, closure*

# Typical **noun suffixes** are:

## **C ) ABSTRACT NOUNS DERIVED FROM ADJECTIVES**

- **-ANCE,-ENCE**, *eg import**ance**; abs**ence**, pres**ence***
- **-TY, -ITY** *eg ab**ility**, activity, equality, cruel**ty***
- **-NESS**, *eg dark**ness**, happiness, kindness*
- **-TH**, *eg leng**th**, strength, truth*

# Typical **noun suffixes** are:

## d) ABSTRACT NOUNS DERIVED FROM NOUNS

- **-DOM**, as in *martyr**dom***, *stardom*;
- **-HOOD**, as in *child**hood***, *motherhood*;
- **-SHIP**, as in *friend**ship***, *sponsorship*.

# Compound nouns

Though built from **two or more stems**, compound nouns often have **one stress**. The meaning of a compound often differs from the meanings of its elements.

The main types of compound nouns:

- **noun-stem + noun-stem:** *apple-tree, snowball;*
- **adjective-stem + noun-stem:** *blackbird, bluebell;*
- **verb-stem + noun-stem:** *pickpocket;*

(the stem of a **verbal** may be the first component of a compound noun: *dining-room, reading-hall, dancing-girl.*)

- **substantivized phrases:** *merry-go-round, forget-me-not.*



*COUNT NOUNS/MASS NOUNS*

*CN/MN*

# COUNT NOUNS

include the class- names of

- **a) *persons, animals, plants, etc:*** *friend, cat, bird, rose*
- **b) *concrete objects having shape:*** *ball, car, hat, hand, house*
- **c) *units of measurement, society, language, etc:*** *metre, hour, dollar, family, word*
- **d) *the individual parts of a mass:*** *part, element, atom, piece, drop*
- **) *a few abstractions, thought of as separate wholes:*** *idea, nuisance, sake, scheme.*

# MASS NOUNS

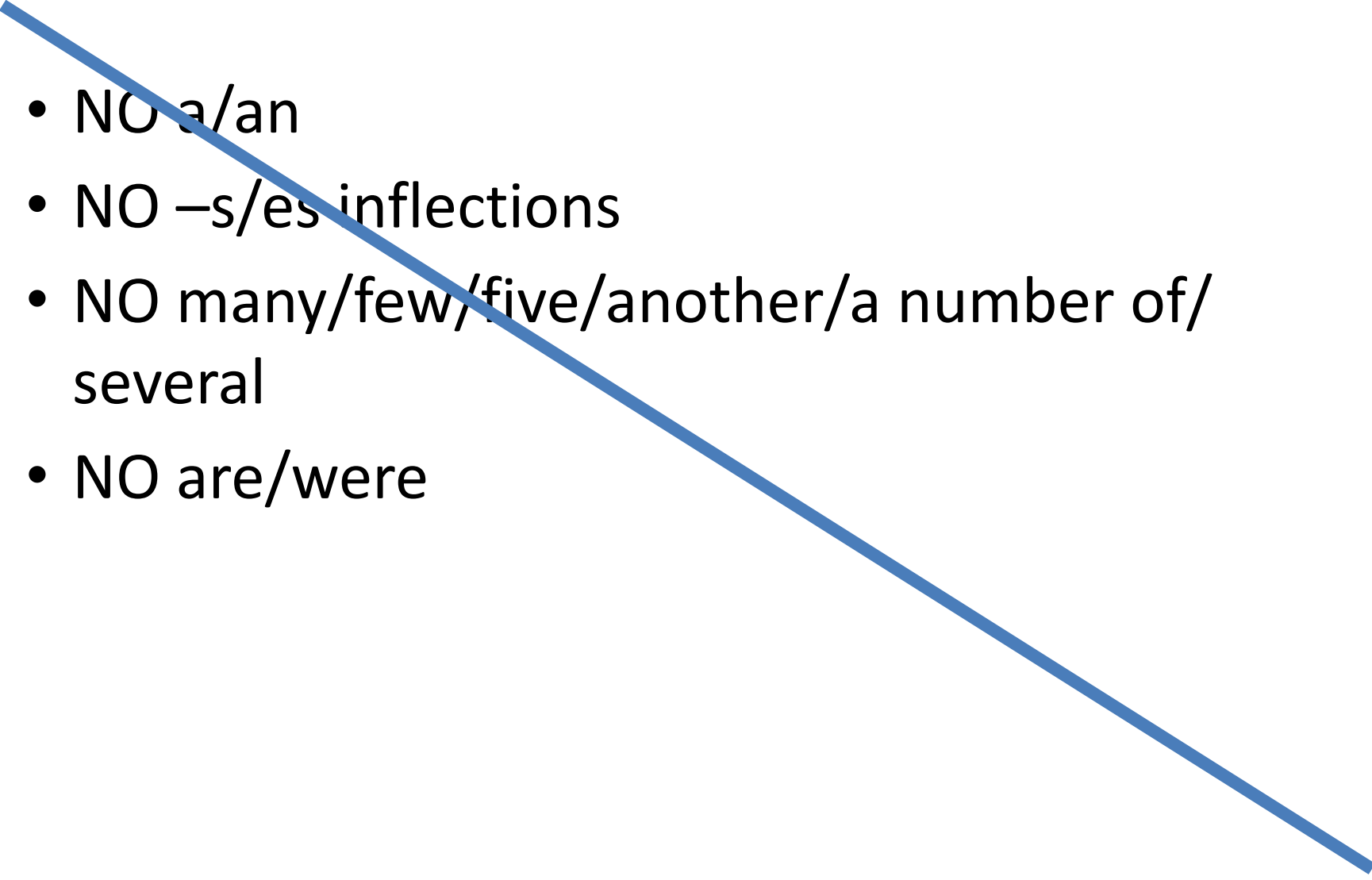
include the names of:

- **A) solid substances and materials:** *earth, bread, rice, cotton, nylon*
- **B) liquids, gases, etc:** *water, oil, tea, air, oxygen, steam, smoke*
- **C) languages:** *English, French, German, Russian, Chinese, Spanish*
- **D) many abstractions:** *equality, honesty, ignorance, peace, safety.*
- **E) most -ing forms used as nouns:** *camping, cooking, clothing, parking, training.*

**REMEMBER:**

*blessing, helping, wedding* are **COUNT** nouns

# MASS NOUNS (Forbidden box)

- NO a/an
  - NO -s/es inflections
  - NO many/few/five/another/a number of/  
several
  - NO are/were
- 

# COMPARE and REMEMBER!!!

## Count nouns

- What a beautiful climate!

Moneys – sums of money (in legal English)

## Mass nouns

- What wonderful weather!

**BUT**

Go out in all **WEATHERS** (*fixed expression*)

How **much money** do you have by?

All his **money is** in real estate

# We are *MASS* nouns!

- accommodation
- advice
- behavior
- cash
- china
- conduct
- damage (= harm)
- fun
- furniture
- harm
- influenza
- information
- knowledge
- laughter
- leisure
- lightning
- luck
- luggage
- money
- mud
- music
- news
- permission
- poetry
- progress
- rubbish
- soap
- weather

# **MN** with corresponding **CN**

- bread a loaf payment a pay
- clothing a garment permission a permit
- laughter a laugh poetry a poem
- luggage a suitcase work a job
- money a coin/a note

**REMEMBER!!** **A play** is not an example of play, but a *dramatic performance*. **Work** is used as a count noun in *a work of art, the works of Shakespeare, road works*

## The idea of ONENESS:

One example of  
a mass can be  
indicated by  
referring to:

- *a piece/a bit* (informal) of something (not liquid): a piece/a bit of paper, string, advice, information, furniture
- *a drop* of liquid: a drop of water, oil, blood
- *an article* of clothing, furniture
- *an item* of news (or a news item)



# The idea of ONENESS

One example of  
a mass can be  
indicated by  
referring to:

- a piece of a certain *shape*, as in:
- a ball of string
- a heap of earth
- a sheet of paper/ metal
- a bar of chocolate/soap/gold
- a loaf of bread
- a slice of bread/ meat
- a blade of grass
- a lump of coal
- a stick of chalk/ dynamite
- a block of ice
- a roll of cloth
- a strip of cloth or land

## The idea of ONENESS:

One example of a mass can be indicated by referring to:

by reference to ***a container***, as in:

- *a bag* of flour
- *a bottle* of milk
- *a basket* of fruit
- *a bucket* of water
- *a sack of coal*

by reference to ***a measure***, as in:

- *a gallon* of oil
- *a kilo* of sugar

# ***WE ARE BOTH (MN/CN)***

## **as a MASS NOUN**

the word refers to

a substance, material or  
phenomenon **in general**

## **as a COUNT NOUN**

the word refers to

- **a separate unit** composed of that substance
- **one occurrence** of that phenomenon
  
- **a special object**

## AS MASS NOUNS

- All plants need *light*.
- Houses were built of *stone*
- I will come with *pleasure*.
- Have *pity!* Have you no *shame*?
- This is the age of *science*
- A city without *art* is dead.
- *Honour* must be satisfied
- Most men want *success*

## AS COUNT NOUNS

- Do you have *a light* by your bed?
- Wait! I have *a stone* in my shoe!
- It will be *a pleasure* to see you.
- What *a pity!* What *a shame!*
- Physics is *a science*.
- Painting is *an art*.
- It is *an honour* for me to be here.
- Your play was *a great success*.  
George was *a great success* in it.

# WE ARE BOTH (MN/CN)

- activity
- agreement
- bone
- brick
- business
- cake
- cloth
- decision
- dress
- duty
- exercise
- experience
- fire
- fish
- fruit
- glass

# *Compare:*

- Mr Price has gone to London on *business*
- *Trade* (*ie* exchange of goods) between our two countries is flourishing
- *Traffic* roars through the city all day long
- He runs *a small business* (*ie* a small shop)
- I think every boy should learn *a trade*, (*ie* a way of earning his living, especially by manual work)
- NN was convicted of conducting *an illegal traffic* in drugs

# *Names of substances*

as **MN** when they refer to a substance in general

Betty Botter bought some *butter*

as **CN**, singular and plural, when they refer to

- a **kind** of the substance
- a **portion** of it

This is *a very good butter* (*ie* a good **kind** of butter).

You've only brought me *one butter*. I asked for two (*butters*), (*ie* **packets** of butter)

# ***Abstract Nouns***

normally used as ***MN***

In most countries, *education* is the responsibility of the state

I attach *importance* to regular exercise,

It is said that *knowledge* is power

***a/an + adjective = CN***  
(when they refer to **a kind**)

Scott received ***a very strict education***

but some people attach ***an exaggerated importance*** to it

***A good knowledge*** of English is essential