

Most nouns have both singular and plural forms:

Apple – Apples

Dog – Dogs

Pencil – Pencils

These nouns are countable nouns.

Some nouns have only a singular form:

Money

Wood

Oxygen

Music

Furniture

These nouns are non-countable nouns.

Non-countable nouns usually fall into one of the following categories:

Category	Example
Concept	bravery, honesty, information, intelligence, patience
Activity	homework, playing, reading, sleeping
Food	bread, butter, cheese, fish, milk
Gas	air, helium, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, smoke
Liquid	coffee, petrol, water, wine, beer, gas
Material	chalk, cloth, concrete, lumber, wood, metal
Item Category	clothing, furniture, luggage, mail, money, software
Natural Phenomenon	gravity, heat, humidity, rain, snow, sunshine, thunder
Particles	dust, flour, rice, salt, sugar

Making Non-Countable Nouns Plural

There are two methods to pluralize a concept expressed by a non-countable noun:

Method #1:

Precede the non-countable noun with a countable noun + the word “of”:

Five loaves of bread.

Thirty panels of sheetrock.

Six programs of software.



Method #2:

Change the non-countable noun into an adjective of a countable noun:

Five bread loaves. Thirty sheetrock panels. Six software programs.

This method is limited to only specific non-countable nouns. While the first method will work, the second method will not. For example:

Six gallons of gas. – **Correct** Six gas gallons. - **Incorrect**

Three pounds of rice. – **Correct** Three rice pounds. – **Incorrect**

Two hours of homework – **Correct** Two homework hours – **Incorrect.**

Much & Many

Much

The word *much* is used with non-countable nouns:

- How much money do you have?
- People do not understand how much time it takes.
- How much wood will you need?
- He has too much homework to do tonight.

Many

The word *many* is used with countable nouns, in their plural form:

- There are many cars in the parking lot.
- Will you be traveling to many cities?
- I have too many shirts to count.
- Do you have many children?

