

## (a) little (a) few

A

(a) **little** + *uncountable noun*:

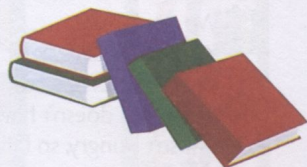
- (a) **little water**
- (a) **little time**
- (a) **little money**
- (a) **little soup**



a little water

(a) **few** + *plural noun*:

- (a) **few books**
- (a) **few questions**
- (a) **few people**
- (a) **few days**



a few books

B

**a little** = some but not much

- ☐ She didn't eat anything, but she drank **a little water**.
- ☐ I speak **a little Spanish**.  
(= some Spanish but not much)
- ☐ A: Can you speak Spanish?  
B: **A little**.

**a few** = some but not many

- ☐ Excuse me, I have to make **a few phone calls**.
- ☐ We're going away for **a few days**.
- ☐ I speak **a few words** of Spanish.
- ☐ A: Do you have any stamps?  
B: Yes, **a few**. Do you want one?

C

**✗ little** (without **a**) = almost no *or* almost nothing

- ☐ There was **little food** in the fridge.  
It was almost empty.

You can say **very little**:

- ☐ Dan is very thin because he eats **very little**. (= almost nothing)

**✗ few** (without **a**) = almost no

- ☐ There were **few people** in the theater.  
It was almost empty.

You can say **very few**:

- ☐ Your English is very good. You make **very few** mistakes.

D

Compare **little** and **a little**:

- ☐ They have **a little** money, so they're not poor. (= they have some money)
- ☐ They have **little** money. They are very poor. (= almost no money)

I have **a little** money.



I have **little** money.

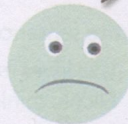
Compare **few** and **a few**:

- ☐ I have **a few** friends, so I'm not lonely. (= I have some friends)
- ☐ I'm sad and I'm lonely. I have **few** friends. (= almost no friends)

I have **a few** friends.



I have **few** friends.





**82.1** Answer the questions with **a little** or **a few**.

- 1 "Do you have any money?" "Yes, a little."
- 2 "Do you have any envelopes?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_."
- 3 "Do you want sugar in your coffee?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_, please."
- 4 "Did you take any pictures when you were on vacation?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_."
- 5 "Does your friend speak English?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_."
- 6 "Are there any good restaurants in this town?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_."

**82.2** Write **a little** or **a few** + these words:

chairs    days    fresh air    friends    milk    Russian    times    ~~years~~

- 1 Mike speaks Italian well. He lived in Italy for a few years.
- 2 Can I have \_\_\_\_\_ in my coffee, please?
- 3 "When did Julia leave?" " \_\_\_\_\_ ago."
- 4 "Do you speak any foreign languages?" "I can speak \_\_\_\_\_."
- 5 "Are you going out alone?" "No, I'm going with \_\_\_\_\_."
- 6 "Have you ever been to Mexico?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_."
- 7 There wasn't much furniture in the room – just a table and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 I'm going out for a walk. I need \_\_\_\_\_.

**82.3** Complete the sentences. Use **very little** or **very few** + these words:

coffee    hotels    ~~mistakes~~    people    rain    time    work

- 1 Your English is very good. You make very few mistakes.
- 2 I drink \_\_\_\_\_. I prefer tea.
- 3 The weather here is very dry in the summer. There is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 It's difficult to find a place to stay in this town. There are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 Hurry up! We've got \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 The town is very quiet at night. \_\_\_\_\_ go out.
- 7 Some people in the office are very lazy. They do \_\_\_\_\_.

**82.4** Write **little** / **a little** or **few** / **a few**.

- 1 There was little food in the fridge. It was almost empty.
- 2 "When did Sarah go out?" " \_\_\_\_\_ minutes ago."
- 3 I can't decide now. I need \_\_\_\_\_ time to think about it.
- 4 There was \_\_\_\_\_ traffic, so we arrived earlier than we expected.
- 5 The bus service isn't very good at night – there are \_\_\_\_\_ buses after 9:00.
- 6 "Would you like some soup?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_, please."
- 7 I'd like to practice my English more, but I have \_\_\_\_\_ opportunities.

**82.5** Right or wrong? Change the sentences where necessary. Write OK if the sentence is correct.

- 1 We're going away for few days next week. for a few days
- 2 Everybody needs little luck. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 I can't talk to you now – I have few things to do. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 I eat very little meat – I don't like it very much. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Excuse me, can I ask you few questions? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 There were little people on the bus – it was almost empty. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Daniel is a very private person. Few people know him well. \_\_\_\_\_