

Determiners

You've already learned about one group of determiners, articles, but there are a few others. Determiners are function words that are said to "mark" nouns. Therefore, in a noun phrase, you know a noun is coming when you see a determiner.

Here is a list of the different groups of determiners¹. This section will focus on a few of the most common.

Definite/Indefinite articles:	the, a, an
Demonstratives:	this, that, these, those
Possessive Pronouns:	my, your, his, her, its, our, their
Quantifiers :	a few, a little, much, many, a lot of, most, some, any, enough
Numbers:	one, ten, thirty
Distributives:	all, both, half, either, neither, each, every
Difference words:	other/others, another
Pre-determiners:	such, what, rather, quite

Demonstratives:

Demonstratives show where a specific object, event, or person is in relation to the speaker. They refer to closeness or distance.

You can use demonstratives in two ways, to modify a noun or to replace a noun.²

1. If it *modifies* a noun, it is called a **demonstrative determiner**.

If you are talking about something close to you, use *this* (with a singular noun) and *these* (with a plural noun)

This is my book. *The singular noun, book, is close to the speaker.*

Are these books yours? *The books [plural] are close to the speaker.*

If you are talking about something farther away, use 'that' and 'those'.

That is my book. *You can see the book, but it is not close to you.*

Those are my books. *You can see the books [plural], but they are not close to you.*

Distance is not just physical distance. We can use 'this', 'that', 'these', and 'those' to show distance in time.

I like this class. *You are in the class.*

I liked that class. *You are not in the class anymore. It is far away in time.*

2. If it *replaces* a noun, it is called a **demonstrative pronoun**. We can use 'this', 'that', 'these', and 'those' as pronouns.

This is my professor. ***Dr. Ferris*** is my professor. (***This*** replaces *Dr. Ferris*, and she is nearby)

That is my professor. ***That*** replaces *Dr. Ferris*, and she is far away from the speaker

ACTIVITY: USE THE CORRECT DEMONSTRATIVE DETERMINER/PRONOUN

1. (the a book in your hand) How could you buy something like _____ ?
2. (a bowl of chips on your lap) _____ chips are delicious!
3. (During a long walk) I should have worn _____ shoes I bought in Greece last year; _____ have never been comfortable.
4. Could you bring me _____ book I left in the garden?
5. (From the marriage vows) To have and to hold from _____ day forward.

¹ <https://www.ef.edu/english-resources/english-grammar/determiners/>

² <https://www.theenglishspace.com/grammar/demonstratives.html>

6. I hate _____ books which tell you: " _____ is what you have to do to become rich."
7. (About a picture hanging on the wall) _____ are my children.
8. (About a picture you've just taken from your wallet) _____ is my wife.

Quantifiers:

Quantifiers tell us how many (countable nouns) or how much (non-countable nouns). Selecting the correct quantifier depends on, much like with many other quantifiers, whether or not the noun is count or noncount, and therefore, plural or singular.³

The following quantifiers will work with **count nouns**:

many courses **a few books** **few classes** **several professors** **a couple of students** **none of the tests**

The following quantifiers will work with **non-count nouns**:

not much/no homework **a little grammar** **little vocabulary** **a bit of advice** **a good/great deal of studying**

The following quantifiers will work with both **count and non-count nouns**

all of the courses/homework	some books/grammar	most of the classes/vocabulary
enough students/advice	a lot of tests/studying	lots of classes/grammar
plenty of students/homework	a lack of professors/vocabulary	

** *In formal academic writing, it is usually better to use many and much rather than phrases such as a lot of, lots of and plenty of.*

There is an important difference between "a little" and "little" (used with non-count words) and between "a few" and "few" (used with count words).

If Maria has **a little** *experience* teaching that means that although Maria is not an expert, she does have some experience and that experience might be enough. If Maria has **little** *experience* teaching that means that she doesn't have enough experience.

If Dino owns a few books about grammar that means that he has some books — not a lot of books, but probably enough for our purposes. If Dino owns **few** *grammar books*, he doesn't have enough.

Unless combined with of, the quantifier much is reserved for questions and negative statements:

Much of the homework is on Canvas. **How much** homework is on Canvas? Not much

Note that the quantifier most of the must include the definite article the when it modifies a specific noun, whether it's a count or a non-count noun:

Most of the *instructors* at UCD have a doctorate. **Most of the** *water* in this experiment has evaporated.

With a general plural noun, the "of the" is dropped:

Most *colleges* have their own plagiarism policy. **Most** *students* apply to several colleges.

ACTIVITY: USE THE CORRECT QUANTIFIER

Choose the correct determiner from the box below to complete each sentences. There may be more than one answer.

³ Adapted from: <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/determiners/determiners.htm>

a few a little a lot a lot of the most plenty many much several some

1. I'm having _____ of trouble passing my physics course.
2. I have had _____ grammar mistakes on my essays.
3. _____ information proved to be outdated.
4. We're close to the project deadline, but there is still _____ time left before the due date.
5. Although there are many international students at UC Davis, only _____ will choose to remain in the state after graduation.
6. We were able to add a few students from the waitlist, but _____ of had to be turned away.
7. Even though most students passed the course, _____ of them have to repeat.
8. Although it does not happen often, there were _____ students who plagiarized on the exam.
9. I think he spent too _____ time studying last night because he looks exhausted.
10. _____ students who eat at the Dining Commons say they don't like the food.

Another, Other, Others:

A simple rule to help you remember the difference between *another* and *other* is:⁴

another + singular noun other + plural noun others (a pronoun to replace other + plural noun)

Another means: one more, an additional, an extra OR a different one; an alternative one

He has enrolled in **another** writing course.

Would you like **another** soda?

Don't worry about the game. We can go to **another** home game this season.

I think you should take **another** instructor this time.

Another + One: Another can be placed before "one" when the meaning is clear from the text before it.

A: You can borrow more of these books if you like.

B: Ok, I'll take **another one**. (one more book)

Another as a pronoun: Sometimes another is used as a pronoun.

A: You can borrow more of these books if you like.

B: Ok, I'll take another. (one more book)

Another + number + plural noun: Another can be used before a plural noun when there is a number before that noun or before phrases such as a couple of, a few etc.

In **another 2 years** I will graduate.

He was given **another couple of months** to complete his dissertation.

OTHER: Other goes before plural *countable nouns*, *uncountable nouns* or a *pronoun*.

Other + Plural Countable Noun: Other can be followed by a plural countable noun.

We have other electives for students.

I have invited some other people to our club meeting.

Some classes are large lectures though other classes can be smaller.

I can't help study for this test all weekend because I have other things to do.

Others as a pronoun: Others replaces "other ones" or "other + plural noun".

⁴ Adapted from: <http://www.grammar.cl/english/another-other-others.htm>

**** Only others can be used as a pronoun and not other.**

I don't like these samples. Let's ask for others. (others = other samples)
Some of the presenters arrived on Monday. Others arrived Tuesday.

Others - the others: Often "(the) others" refers to "(the) other people".

He has no interest in helping others. (other people)

What are the others doing tonight? (you know these other people; the rest of the group)

ACTIVITY: USE THE OTHER, OTHERS, ANOTHER CORRECTLY

Decide whether or not to use *other*, *others*, or *another* in the sentences below.

1. I would like _____ chance to submit my homework correctly.
2. Would you like _____ copy of the syllabus?
3. I think we should make _____ plans just in case Anastasia doesn't show up.
4. We need some more chairs. I'll take these and you take the _____.
5. You take one pile of books, and I'll take the _____ one.
6. This bus might be slow, but _____ are much faster.
7. I'm going to drop this class and take _____ one.
8. She had her laptop in one hand and her textbook in the _____.