

# ENGLISH \_1

## Lecture #5

Department of Agricultural Machines  
College of Agriculture  
University of Basrah




# Countable and uncountable nouns

Do you know how to use *a few*, *few*, *very little* and *a bit of*?

Look at these examples to see how these quantifiers are used with countable and uncountable nouns.

1. I have **a few** friends, so I'm not lonely.
2. She has **few** friends, so she's quite lonely.
3. We've got **a bit of** time before our train. Shall we get a coffee?
4. We've got **very little** time before our train. Hurry up!



*A few* and *a bit of* or *a little* mean *some*. Often we feel this amount is enough or more than we expected. We use *a few with plural nouns* and *a bit of or a little with uncountable nouns*.

1. I have **a few** ideas.
2. I've brought **a few** friends.
3. There's **a bit of** milk left.
4. It needs **a little** more work.

- ▶ We use *few* and *very little* to show that we are talking about a small amount. Often we feel this amount is not enough or less than we expected. *Few is for countable nouns* and *very little is for uncountable nouns*.

1. **Few** people came to the meeting.
2. There are **few** places where you can still see these birds.
3. We have **very little** time.
4. I have **very little** money.

- ❖ Note that you can use *little* without *very*, but it is less common and sounds quite formal.

- She had **little** water



# Past continuous and past simple

- ▶ Do you know how to use the past continuous and past simple?

Look at these examples to see how the past continuous and past simple are used.

- *When I woke up this morning, it was snowing.*
- *I was sleeping when you called me.*

The past continuous and the past simple help us to show how two past actions or situations are connected.



# Past simple

- ▶ The past simple shows us that an action was in the past, not in the present. Regular past simple verbs have *-ed* at the end (e.g. *called, played, arrived*). Irregular verbs have a different form, usually with a different vowel sound (e.g. *wake* → *woke*, *break* → *broke*, *feel* → *felt*).
- *My parents called me yesterday.*
- *I woke up early this morning.*
- *Sam played basketball when he was at university.*



► We make the negative with *didn't* and the infinitive verb.

- *My parents didn't call me yesterday.*
- *I didn't wake up early this morning.*

► We make the question form with *did* and then the subject and infinitive verb.

- *Did you wake up early this morning?*
- *Did Sam play basketball when he was at university?*



## Past continuous

The past continuous shows us that the action was already in progress at a certain time in the past.


*What were you doing at 8 p.m. last night? I was studying.*

This means that I started studying before 8 p.m. and I continued after 8 p.m.

The past continuous can also show that an activity was in progress for some time, not just for a moment.

*We were cleaning the house all morning.*



- 
- ▶ We make the past continuous with *was* or *were* and the *-ing* form of the verb.
    - *She couldn't come to the party. She was working.*
    - *Three years ago, we were living in my home town.*
    - *I tried to give him some advice, but he wasn't listening.*
    - *What were you doing this time last year?*

# Past continuous and past simple

- ▶ When we use these two tenses together, it shows us that the past simple action happened in the middle of the past continuous action, while it was in progress.

*While I was studying, I suddenly felt sleepy.*

- ▶ We often use these tenses to show an action interrupting another action.
- *I broke my leg when I was skiing.*
- *As I was going to work, I saw an old friend.*
- *We were watching television when the power went off.*



► Can you see a difference in the meaning of these two sentences?

1. *When the guests arrived, Jane was cooking dinner.*
2. *When the guests arrived, Jane cooked dinner.*

In the first one, Jane started cooking dinner before the guests arrived. We know that because it uses the past continuous. In the second sentence, the guests arrived first and then Jane started cooking.