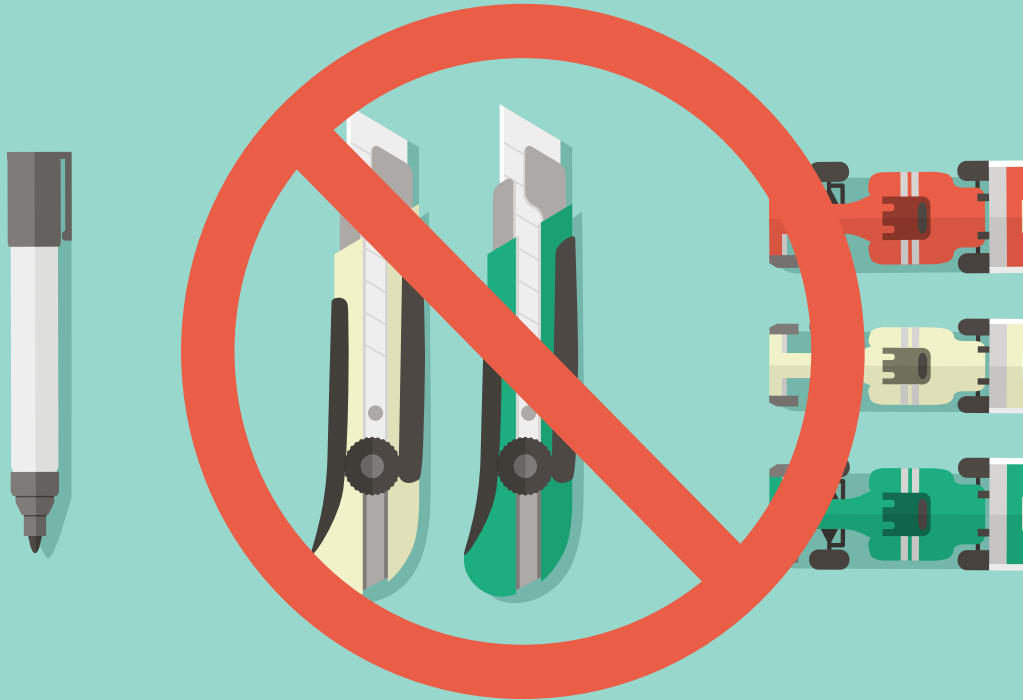


#7: Uncountable nouns



We're all familiar with counting objects (or nouns). E.g. I have two dogs. Sandra has three cars. Jessie has ten dollars. But uncountable nouns are not a given in every language. Translating between languages that share the concept of uncountable nouns is one thing, but it's hardly a given if your native language doesn't use uncountable nouns.

Uncountable nouns are not counted in English. This usually has to do with the way English speakers think of these nouns. We often picture these nouns as a single concept or one big thing which is hard to divide. Many of these words are countable in other languages, but they ARE NOT countable in English. Generally, we do not use plural forms of these words; however some of these words do end in "s", so don't get confused. E.g. Mack drinks a lot of water. Cindy gives great advice. Paul enjoys politics (Ends with "s" but uncountable).

Here's a little hint to help you identify possible uncountable nouns. Uncountable nouns tend to belong to one of the following categories:

- **Liquids and Gases:** e.g. water, coffee, air
- **Solid and Granular Substances:**
e.g. wood, cheese, sand
- **Energy Words and Forces:**
e.g. electricity, sunshine, heat
- **Subjects:** e.g. chemistry, economics, science
- **Grouped Concepts:** e.g. fruit, money, news
- **Information and Abstract Concepts:**
e.g. information, advice, education

Posted by Ulrike Anderson,
German to English ST

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Other Lessons

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