Grammatica

Countable and uncountable nouns

Trascrizione

Hello, my name in Catherine. Today we are going to talk about countable and uncountable nouns. A countable noun refers to objects or things which can be counted, and it has a plural form. We use the indefinite article “a” or “an” with singular countable nouns. Instead, we use the definite article “the” with both singular and plural nouns. For example:   
“a book” / “two books”  
“the book” / “the books”

Uncountable nouns cannot be counted. They do not have a plural form and we do not use the indefinite articles “a” or “an”. Instead, we can use “the” or “some”. For example: “water”, “the water”, “some water” but not “a water”. Some nouns have no plural form, we consider these uncountable.  
These require a verb in the singular form. Here are some examples:  
Hair: Is her hair long or short?  
Advice: Can you give me some advice?  
Homework: Correcting homework takes time.

Be very careful, because in American and Australian English sometimes these nouns have a plural form but they do not in Standard British English.

Some words can be countable or uncountable but the meanings change. For example, if we say “a wood”, I refer to a forest full of trees. Instead, if I say “some wood” I refer to the raw material that we use to make tables and chairs.

Other nouns are considered collective nouns. They don’t require a plural form but they do require a verb in the plural form. Let’s take for example “team”: “the team are arriving home from the competition”. On the contrary, some nouns have a plural form but they do not require a plural verb. For example “scissors”: “the scissors is in the pencil case”.

Now, this grammar point can be difficult so it’s really important to trust your instincts. That’s all for today! Bye bye!