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NOUN

From Mantropedia

A noun (from Latin nōmen, literally [name](#)) is a word that functions as the [name](#) of a specific [object](#) or set of objects, [such](#) as living creatures, places, actions, qualities, states of existence, or ideas. However, noun is not a semantic category, so it cannot [be](#) characterized in terms of its meaning. Thus, actions and states of existence can also [be](#) expressed by [verbs](#), qualities by [adjectives](#), and places by adverbs. Linguistically, a noun is a member of a large, open part of speech whose members can occur as the main word in the subject of a clause, the [object](#) of a [verb](#), or the [object](#) of a [preposition](#).

Classification

Proper and common nouns

Main article: Proper and common [nouns](#) A proper noun or proper [name](#) is a noun representing unique entities ([such](#) as India, Pegasus, Jupiter, Confucius, or Pequod), as distinguished from common [nouns](#), which describe a class of entities ([such](#) as country, [animal](#), planet, [person](#) or [ship](#)).

Countable nouns and mass nouns

Main articles: Count noun and Mass noun Count [nouns](#) or countable [nouns](#) are common [nouns](#) that can take a plural, can combine with numerals or counting quantifiers (e.g., one, two, several, every, most), and can take [an](#) indefinite article [such](#) as a or [an](#) (in languages which have [such](#) articles). Examples of count [nouns](#) are [chair](#), [nose](#), and occasion.

Mass [nouns](#) or uncountable (or non-count) [nouns](#) differ from count [nouns](#) in precisely that respect: they cannot take plurals or combine with number words or the above type of quantifiers. For example, it is not possible to refer to a furniture or three furnitures. This is true even though the pieces of furniture comprising furniture could [be](#) counted. Thus the distinction between mass and count [nouns](#) should not [be](#) made in terms of what sorts of things the [nouns](#) refer to, but rather in terms of how the [nouns](#) present these entities.

Many [nouns](#) have both countable and uncountable uses; for example, soda is countable in give me three sodas, but uncountable in he likes soda.

Collective nouns

Main article: Collective noun Collective [nouns](#) are [nouns](#) that – even when they are inflected for the singular – refer to groups consisting of more than one individual or entity. Examples include committee, government, and police. In English these [nouns](#) may [be](#) followed by a singular or a plural [verb](#) and referred to by a singular or plural [pronoun](#), the singular being generally preferred when referring to the [body](#) as a unit and the plural often being preferred, especially in British English, when emphasizing the individual members. Examples of acceptable and unacceptable use given by Gowers

in Plain Words include:

A committee was appointed to consider this subject. (singular) The committee were unable to agree. (plural) * The committee were of one [mind](#) when I [sat](#) in on them. (unacceptable use of plural)

Concrete nouns and abstract nouns

Further information: Physical [body](#) and Abstract [object](#) Concrete [nouns](#) refer to physical entities that can, in principle at least (i.e. different schools of philosophy and sciences may question the assumption, but, for the most part, people agree to the existence of something. E.g. a rock, a [tree](#), universe), [be](#) observed by at least one of the senses (for instance, [chair](#), apple, Janet or atom). Abstract [nouns](#), on the other [hand](#), refer to abstract objects; that is, ideas or concepts ([such](#) as justice or hatred). While this distinction is sometimes exclusive, some [nouns](#) have multiple senses, including both concrete and abstract ones: for example, the noun art, which usually refers to a concept (e.g., Art is [an](#) important element of [human](#) culture.) but which can refer to a specific artwork in certain contexts (e.g., I put my daughter's art [up](#) on the fridge.)

Some abstract [nouns](#) developed etymologically by figurative extension from literal roots. These include drawback, fraction, holdout and uptake. Similarly, some [nouns](#) have both abstract and concrete senses, with the latter having developed by figurative extension from the former. These include view, filter, structure and key.

In English, many abstract [nouns](#) are formed by adding a suffix (-ness, -ity, -ion) to [adjectives](#) or [verbs](#). Examples are happiness (from the [adjective](#) happy), circulation (from the [verb](#) circulate) and serenity (from the [adjective](#) serene).

Alienable vs. inalienable nouns

Main article: Inalienable possession Some languages, [such](#) as the Awa [language](#) spoken in Papua New Guinea, refer to [nouns](#) differently, depending on how ownership is being given for the given noun. This can [be](#) broken into two categories: alienable possession and inalienable possession. An alienably possessed noun is something that can exist independent of a possessor: for example 'tree' can [be](#) possessed ('Lucy's [tree](#)') but need not [be](#) ('the [tree](#)'), and likewise for 'shirt' ('Mike's shirt', 'that shirt') and 'roads' ('London's roads', 'those roads').

Inalienably possessed [nouns](#), on the other [hand](#), refer to something that does not exist independently of a possessor; this includes kin terms [such](#) as 'father', [body-part nouns](#) [such](#) as 'shadow' or '[hair](#)', and part-whole [nouns](#) [such](#) as 'top' and 'bottom'.

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