

there is and there are

English Grammar · A1

Singular and Plural

There is / There are

There is	There are
singular / uncountable	plural
<i>a cat · water</i>	<i>two books</i>

There is / There are: reference card grid

there is / there are means “there exists” (something exists somewhere).

- **There is + singular / uncountable** noun: There is a book.
- **There are + plural** noun: There are two books.

There is a cat on the sofa.

There is a cat on the sofa.

There are three books on the desk.

There are three books on the table.

Note: In spoken English, there is is often contracted to **there's**: There's a problem.

Negation and Interrogative

Negative: there is **not** / there are **not** (contracted as there isn't / there aren't).

There isn't any milk.

There is no milk left.

Question: Move is / are to the **front** of there.

Is there a bank near here?

Is there a bank nearby?

Short answer: **Yes, there is.** / **No, there isn't.**

Note: Use **any** frequently in negative / question sentences: Is there **any** water? (Is there any water?)

Common Errors

- × ~~Here has many people.~~ → ✓ **There are** many people here. — The “have” in the Chinese “There are many people here” indicates existence; use there is / there are in English, do not translate literally as have.
- × ~~There have a book on the desk.~~ → ✓ There **is** a book on the desk. — Use is / are after there; there have does not exist.
- × ~~There is two cats.~~ → ✓ There **are** two cats. — If the following noun is plural, use are.
- × ~~There are a milk.~~ → ✓ There is **some** milk. — milk is uncountable: use there is + some, do not use a.