



Presentation

Use *much*, *many*, *lots*, *a lot of*, *a little*, and *a few* to talk about quantity.

much / many

You usually use *much* / *many* in questions and negative statements. Use *much* with uncountable nouns and *many* with plural countable nouns:

I don't have much time. I don't have many friends.
How much money do you earn? How many different sports do you play?

Don't use *much* in speech in affirmative statements. You normally use *a lot* / *lots*:

Say *I have a lot of free time this weekend.* (don't say *I have much free time this weekend.*)

You can use *many* in affirmative statements, but it can seem very formal:

I have many things to do today. (formal)
I have a lot of things to do today. (more common)

not much / not many

Use *not much* and *not many* to talk about small quantities.

Use *not much* with uncountable nouns:

I don't have much work to do this weekend.

Use *not many* with plural countable nouns:

I don't exercise many hours a week.

You can also use *not much* and *not many* in short answers:

How many hours a week do you exercise? Not many.

a lot of / lots of

Use *lots of* or *a lot of* to talk about large quantities with uncountable nouns and plural countable nouns:

I spend a lot of money on food. I have lots of meetings.

There is no difference in meaning or use between *lots of* and *a lot of*:

I spend a lot of money on food. = I spend lots of money on food.

Do not use *of* when there is no noun:

How much exercise do you do?

Say *A lot.* (don't say *A lot of.*)

a little / a few

Use *a little* and *a few* to talk about small quantities.

Use *a little* with uncountable nouns: *I have a little free time.*

Use *a few* with plural countable nouns: *I play a few sports.*

You can also use *little* and *few* without *a* but there is a difference in meaning.

A little or *a few* has a positive meaning. *Little* or *few* has a negative meaning:

I have a little free time today so let's play golf. ☺

I have little free time so I can't play golf. ☹

TIP *not much* / *not many* have a similar meaning to *very little* / *few*:

I don't have much free time = I have very little time.

I don't have many friends at work = I have very few friends.

1 Choose the correct words.

- A: Are you spending ¹ *lot* / *lots* of time at the gym these days?
 B: No, not ² *much* / *many*. What about you?
 A: No, I have very ³ *little* / *few* spare time at the moment.
 B: Me too. A ⁴ *little* / *few* of my friends find time to go out after work but I find there aren't any hours left for anything else.
 A: How ⁵ *much* / *many* hours do you work a week?
 B: A ⁶ *lot* / *lots*! Last week I worked over one hundred hours.
 A: Don't you get any vacation?
 B: I have a ⁷ *little* / *few* days off next week, actually.

2 Correct the mistake in lines 1–8. Underline the mistake and write the correction.

- 1 A survey of gyms and fitness centers suggests that people spend ^{a lot / lots of} a lots of
 2 their spare time at the gym, but very little people are actually losing any weight.
 3 In answer to the question “How many weight have you lost since joining the
 4 gym?” only 23% of the members said they were fitter. A little people (4%) even
 5 said they had gained a few weight. But gyms need not worry about these results.
 6 When asked the question “Will you pay your membership next year?” only few
 7 people answered “no” (9%). It's clear that much members are more interested in
 8 the extra benefit, e.g. the sauna.

3 Choose the correct words. In two sentences both answers are possible.

- 1 A: How *much* / *many* milk do you like in your tea?
 B: A *lot* / *lot of*, please.
 2 *Lot* / *Lots* of students study online nowadays.
 3 *Few* / *A few* people write letters anymore. Everyone uses e-mail.
 4 Can I have *much* / *a little* ice cream, please? It looks delicious!
 5 Would you like *a little* / *few* milk?
 6 Sorry, but we don't have *much* / *many* information about train times.
 7 You don't earn *much* / *little* money as a teacher!
 8 There *isn't much* / *'s very little* bread left. Can you buy some?
 9 The post office is only *a little* / *a few* yards from the movie theater.
 10 In my opinion, *not many* / *few* children learn to be polite anymore.