# Pre-intermediate Unit 5a

*much/many, lots/a lot of, a little/a few*

## 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 haven't got **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've got **a lot of** free time this weekend.* (don't say *I've got ~~much~~ free time this weekend.*)

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

*I've got **many** things to do today.* (formal)
*I've got **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 haven**'t** got **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.*


© National Geographic Learning

## 1 Choose the correct words. Then listen and check.

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 holiday?
B: I have a [7] *little / few* days off next week, actually.

## 2 Correct the mistake in lines 1–7. Underline the mistake and write the correction.

1 A survey of gyms and fitness centres 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 needn't 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
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 email.
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* metres from the cinema.
10 In my opinion, *not many / few* children learn to be polite anymore.

 © National Geographic Learning