

How to use measuring words?

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What are measuring words?

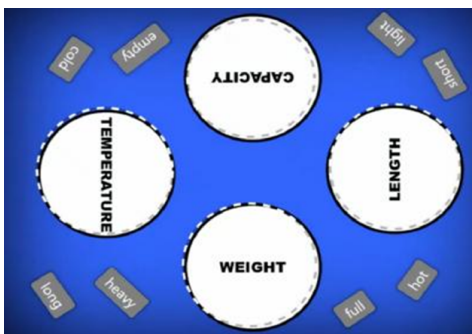
Nouns are of many kinds; countable and non-countable being two of them. When referring to such nouns, how do we define them? This is where measuring words come into play. Also known as numeral classifiers, or counters, the most common measuring words we use in our day-to-day routine are kilometer, centimeter, inches, grams, etc.

These measuring words are used when we know the exact amount of the measurable noun. A very important step to [improve spoken English](#) is to learn the correct usage of measuring words

For example, when we have to go somewhere we can say, “Oh! The cinema theater is only three kilometers away.” Or, “I shall be at your place in exactly 10 minutes.”

In the above phrases, the words kilometers and minutes are measuring words and are used to denote the exact amount of distance and time, respectively.

However, there are a lot many measuring words that we use without realizing that they are measuring words! These words are commonly used in the context of non-countable items like food products, toiletries, stationery, etc. Learning measuring words and using them properly is an important and easy way to [learn English](#).



Caption: Measuring words are used for quantifying items, or other aspects like time, distance, weight, etc.

Measuring Words For Different Categories Of Items

So what are the measuring words used for non-count items? Let us learn a few of them:

• **Toiletries and grooming products:** When you go to a shop to buy soap, what do you say? “Give me 250 grams of soap?” No. A soap is always a ‘bar of soap’. So the correct way of buying soap would be, “Could I have a bar of soap?”

Similarly, other toiletries are also referred using particular words like ‘a bottle of shampoo’, ‘a stick of deodorant’, ‘a tube of toothpaste’, etc.



Caption: How do you quantify these items?

When you wish to learn English speaking, it is prudent that you also learn using the right measuring words. To get you going, here is a little exercise for you.

Write down the measuring words used for the following items:

1. Cotton
2. Perfume
3. Toilet paper
4. Lipstick
5. Butter

• **Liquids:** We all know that liquid is always measured in liters, but can you measure a cup of coffee in liters? No, because a cup of coffee is a cup of coffee! That is the measuring word for it – a cup. Similarly, many other liquid items have different measuring words like ‘a tub of ice cream’, ‘a drop of blood’, etc.

Can you find what measuring words to use with the following words?

1. Milk
2. Wine
3. Medicine

• **Food:** Read the following conversation and identify the measuring words



Ramesh: I would like to have a loaf of bread, a pack of pasta and an ear of corn, please.

Shopkeeper: Sure. Would you like to have this can of soup? It has arrived just now.

pack and box – these words have been used to quantify various food products, and thus they play the role of measuring words.

Caption: You can practice a number of measuring words while describing the contents of a bag of grocery!

We hope this session is useful in helping you [learn English](#) and speak the language fluently.

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- By Chander Madan

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