Amount vs. Number

As if math is not already a challenge to most people, distinguishing the terms amount and number from each other when describing quantity adds to the struggle. But before we discuss the differences between the two words, we should focus on the concepts of count nouns and mass nouns first.

Count nouns or countable nouns are anything that can be counted, whether singular or plural, such as books, a pen, and people riding a bus. On the other hand, mass nouns are anything that cannot be counted and are always written in the singular form, such as water, advice, and garbage. In order to express them in plural form, they are paired with words expressing a plural concept to help writers be more specific.

Examples:

Water – buckets of water
Advice – pieces of advice
Garbage – bags of garbage
As a noun, the word amount refers to "a quantity of something," and is particularly used with mass nouns.

Americans are wildly underestimating the amount of salt in their food
Yahoo News UK

The amount of space junk around Earth has hit a critical point — and it could jeopardize our space missions
Business Insider

It can also be used as a verb meaning "come to be the total when added together."

Demonetised currency amounting to Rs 51.56 lakh seized; 5 held
The Tribune

BRIEF-Marfin investment Group results after taxes amounted to a loss of 85 million euros
Reuters

Meanwhile, the word number is also used as a noun referring to " a quantity of something," and is

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mostly used with count nouns.

> A record number of French voters were so disgusted they cast a blank vote for nobody
> Quartz

> '13 Reasons Why' highlights a wider problem: The number of children with thoughts of suicide doubled in 10 years
> MarketWatch

Now that we have determined the differences and uses amount and number, it would be easier to utilize them in our writing. A trick for remembering would be to note that amount is for mass nouns because they both have an m in their spelling while number is for count nouns because we count using numbers.