

When to use some and any

The words some and any are determiners. They are used to modify nouns. Some and any can be used with both countable and uncountable nouns. They show an indefinite quantity or number.

There are some mangoes on the tree. (We don't mention the exact number of mangoes on the tree.)

I haven't got any money.

She has some friends in Hong Kong.

Some and any can be used with both singular and plural nouns.

Have you got any friends? (Here 'any' is used to modify the plural noun 'friends'.)

We haven't got any oil. (Here 'any' is used with the singular uncountable noun 'oil'.)

Some and any are used to refer to an indefinite quantity or number.

Use 'some' in affirmative sentences. We can use some with both countable and uncountable nouns.

I need some oil.

There were some boys in the class.

I need some help.

Use 'any' in negative and interrogative sentences.

She hasn't got any friends.

Have you got any milk?

Exceptions

Some can be used in polite requests and offers.

Would you like some cheese? (More natural than 'Would you like any cheese?')

Could I have some more rice? (Polite request)

Common expressions with some include: somebody, someone, something and somewhere. They are all used in affirmative sentences.

I need someone to help you.

Common expressions with any include: anybody, anyone, anything and anywhere. They are all mainly used in negative sentences and questions.

I haven't got anything to do.

She hasn't got anyone to help her.