



## Fewer vs. Less

In academic writing, accuracy matters – especially with grammar. A common cause of confusion is knowing when to use "fewer" and when to use "less." Even though both describe smaller amounts, they are used in different ways. It all depends on whether the noun is countable or uncountable. This Scrib.bit will help you remember the rules and apply them correctly in essays, reports, and presentations.

### Use fewer – for countable nouns

Countable nouns are things you can count one by one.

Use 'fewer' with	Examples
students	<i>Fewer students attended the lecture this week.</i>
articles	<i>The second essay had fewer articles in its reference list.</i>
experiments	<i>This method requires fewer experiments to reach a conclusion.</i>

### Use less – for uncountable nouns

Uncountable nouns refer to things you can't count individually.

Use 'less' with	Examples
time	<i>We had less time to complete the lab work.</i>
information	<i>The second report included less relevant information.</i>
research	<i>The paper is weaker because it is based on less research.</i>

**Exceptions to remember**

Some nouns that seem countable use *less* in standard usage:

Category	Examples
time	<i>The test took less than 30 minutes.</i>
money	<i>Students who spend less than \$100 on textbooks may struggle.</i>
distance	<i>The new campus is less than 2 kilometres away.</i>
weight/ volume	<i>Your bag should be less than 11 pounds./ Use less than 2 litres of water in the experiment.</i>
age	<i>Children less than 12 years old must be accompanied.</i>

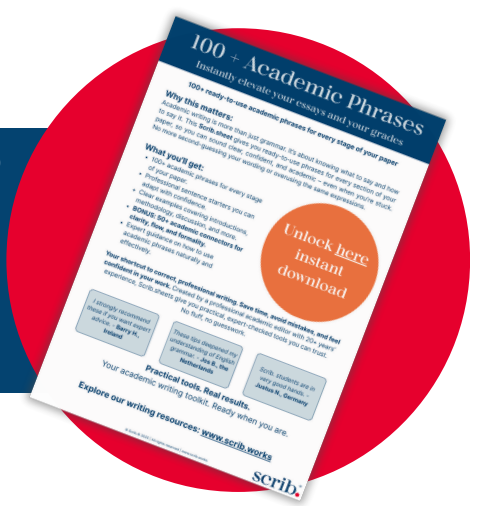
**Tip for exceptions:**

When measurements are seen as a single unit or total amount, we use *less*.

**General tip for fewer or less:**

- If you can count it → use fewer.
- If you measure it → use less.

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