

**lots** [lot lots lotted lotting] pronoun, determiner, adverb, noun BrE [lɒt] <sup>1</sup> NAmE [ləʊt] <sup>2</sup>

**pronoun a lot** (also informal lots) ~ (to do)

a large number or amount

- 'How many do you need?' 'A lot.'
- Have some more cake. There's lots left.
- She still has **an awful lot** (= a very large amount) to learn.
- He has invited nearly a hundred people but a lot aren't able to come.

Word Origin:

Old English hlot (noun), of Germanic origin; related to Dutch **lot**, German **Los**. The original meaning was 'by lot' and (by extension) the sense 'a portion assigned to someone'; this gave rise to the other noun senses. The pronoun and adverbuses date from the early 19th cent.

Grammar Point:

**many / a lot of / lots of**

Many is used only with countable nouns. It is used mainly in questions and negative sentences: ▪ Do you go to many concerts? ◇ ▪ How many ▪ people came to the meeting? ◇ ▪ I don't go to many concerts. Although it is not common in statements, it is used after **so**, **as** and **too**: ▪ You made too many mistakes.

In statements a lot of or lots of (informal) are much more common: ▪ I go to a lot of concerts. ◇ ▪ 'How many CDs have you got?' 'Lots!' However, they are not used with measurements of time or distance: ▪ I stayed in England for many/quite a few/ten weeks. ◇ I stayed in England a lot of weeks. When a lot of/lots of means 'many', it takes a plural verb ▪ Lots of people like Italian food. You can also use plenty of (informal): ▪ Plenty of stores stay open late. These phrases can also be used in questions and negative sentences.

A lot of/lots of is still felt to be informal, especially in BrE, so in formal writing it is better to use many or a large number of in statements.

note at ↑much

Grammar Point:

**much / a lot of / lots of**

Much is used only with uncountable nouns. It is used mainly in questions and negative sentences: ▪ Do you have much free time? ◇ ▪ How much ▪ experience have you had? ◇ ▪ I don't have much free time.

In statements a lot of or lots of (informal) is much more common: ▪ 'How much (money) does she earn?' ◇ ▪ She earns a lot of money. You can also use plenty (of). These phrases can also be used in questions and negative sentences.

A lot of/lots of is still felt to be informal, especially in BrE, so in formal writing it is better to use much, a great deal of or a large amount of.

Very much and a lot can be used as adverbs ▪ I miss my family very much. ◇ I miss very much my family. ◇ ▪ I miss my family a lot. ◇ ▪ Thanks a lot. In negative sentences you can use much: ▪ I didn't enjoy the film (very) much.

note at ↑many

Idioms: ↑all over the lot ▪ ↑bad lot ▪ ↑by lot ▪ ↑draw lots ▪ ↑fall to somebody's lot ▪ ↑throw in your lot with somebody

**determiner a lot of** (also informal lots of)

a large number or amount of sb/sth

- What a lot of presents!
- A lot of people are coming to the meeting.
- black coffee with lots of sugar
- I saw a lot of her (= I saw her often) last summer.

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note at ↑much

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note at ↑[many](#)

### adverb (informal)

**1. a lot** (*also informal lots*) used with adjectives and adverbs to mean 'much'

- I'm feeling a lot better today.
- I eat lots less than I used to.

**2. a lot** used with verbs to mean 'a great amount'

- I care a lot about you.
- Thanks a lot for your help.
- I play tennis quite a lot (= often) in the summer.

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note at ↑[many](#)

### noun

#### WHOLE AMOUNT/NUMBER

**1. the lot, the whole lot** *singular + singular or plural verb* (*informal*) the whole number or amount of people or things

- He's bought a new PC, colour printer, scanner— the lot.
- Get out of my house, **the lot of you** !
- **That's the lot!** (= that includes everything)
- **That's your lot!** (= that's all you're getting)

#### GROUP/SET

**2. countable + singular or plural verb** (*especially BrE*) a group or set of people or things

- The first lot of visitors has/have arrived
- I have several lots of essays to mark this weekend.
- (*informal*) What do **you lot** want?

#### ITEMS TO BE SOLD

**3. countable** an item or a number of items to be sold, especially at an ↑[auction](#)

- Lot 46: six chairs

#### AREA OF LAND

**4. countable** an area of land used for a particular purpose

- a parking lot
- a vacant lot (= one available to be built on or used for sth)
- (*especially NAmE*) We're going to build a house on this lot.

#### LUCK/SITUATION

**5. singular** a person's luck or situation in life

**Syn:** ↑[destiny](#)

- She was feeling dissatisfied with her lot.

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Synonyms:

**land**

lot • ground • space • plot

These words all mean an area of land that is used for a particular purpose.

**land** • an area of ground, especially one that is used for a particular purpose: ▪ agricultural land

**lot** • (NAme) a piece of land that is used or intended for a particular purpose: ▪ building lots ◊▪ a parking lot

**ground** • an area of land that is used for a particular purpose: ▪ The kids were playing on waste ground near the school. ◊▪ the site of an ancient burial ground

**land, lot or ground?**

**Land** is used for large areas of open land in the country, especially when it is used for farming. A **lot** is often a smaller piece of land in a town or city, especially one intended for building or parking on. **Ground** is any area of open land; a **ground** is an area of land designed or used for a particular purpose or activity.

**space** • a large area of land that has no buildings on it: ▪ The city has plenty of open space. ◊▪ the ▪ wide open spaces ▪ of the Canadian prairies

**plot** • a small piece of land used or intended for a particular purpose: ▪ She bought a small ▪ plot of land ▪ to build a house. ◊▪ a vegetable plot

**lot or plot?**

Either a **lot** or a **plot** can be used for building on. Only a **plot** can also be used for growing vegetables or burying people. an **open space**

**open/empty/vacant/waste/derelict** land/ground

a/an **empty/vacant** lot/plot

Example Bank:

- I had an awful lot of work to do.
- I've got an awful lot of work to do before I go on holiday.
- Our house is built on a lot that's somewhat below street level.
- She bought the whole lot.
- There's not a whole lot of difference between them.
- a hell of a lot of money
- abandoned lots converted into baseball fields
- the market for homes on smaller lots
- Building lots will cost between \$100 000 and \$500 000.
- He backed the car into the parking lot.
- He threw in his lot with the pirates.
- It fell to her lot to organize the Christmas party.
- Shall I put this lot with the others?
- She was feeling very dissatisfied with her lot.
- Some kids were playing ball in a vacant lot.
- The first lot of visitors has/have arrived

See also: ↑lots

**lots**

12500 **1542**<sup>MCW</sup>

15000 **174**<sup>COCA</sup>

RANGE: **1k** LOT <sup>239108</sup>

lot 213714

lots 25394

COCA 500k Unlemmatized

17550 **1722**<sup>24846</sup> *pn*

510 **30237**<sup>548</sup> *nn2*