

1. [fju:] *n*1) **немногие; незначительное количество**

few of the inhabitants were to be seen - только немногих жителей можно было увидеть

2) **мало кто; почти никто**

few of them had travelled - мало кто из них путешествовал

there are very few of us - нас очень мало

there are very few of us who can remember - почти никто из нас не помнит

a few (of) - а) немного, незначительное количество; a few thought otherwise - немногие думали иначе

a good few, quite a few - большое /порядочное/ количество; there were a good few of them - их было немало; a good few of the

inhabitants - добрая половина населения /жителей; not a few - много, большое количество; б) некоторые; некоторое

количество; we shall only have a few - нас будет немного; I know a few of them - я знаю кое-кого из них

the few - а) меньшинство; б) «избранные»

the thinking few - думающее меньшинство

the fortunate few - немногие счастливые

some few - незначительное число, несколько, немного

◇ few know and fewer care - немногие знают, а таких, кто хочет знать, ещё меньше

in few - в нескольких словах, кратко

2. [fju:] *a*1) **немногие, немного, мало**

he has but few chances of success - у него мало шансов на успех

with few exceptions - за редким исключением

one of his few pleasures - одно из его немногих удовольствий

during the last few days [years] - за последние несколько дней [лет]

few people are able to understand him - мало кто способен понять его

every few hours [days, years] - через каждые несколько часов [дней, лет]

a few - несколько

a few hours - несколько часов

a few people were present - присутствовало всего несколько человек

I know a few people who ... - я знаю людей, которые ...

I have only a few pounds - у меня всего только несколько фунтов

the chairman said a few words - председатель сказал несколько слов

in a few minutes - через несколько минут, скоро, вскоре

he went away for a few days - он уехал на несколько дней

I'd like a few more of these (berries) - положите /дайте/ мне, пожалуйста, ещё (ягод)

2) **преим. predic** *немногочисленный*

such occasions are few - такие случаи очень редки

his friends are few - у него мало друзей

◇ few and far between - немногочисленные и отделённые большим промежутком времени *или* расстоянием

our meetings are few and far between - мы редко встречаемся

the trees were few and far between - деревья росли редко

few

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 8th Ed.

few [**few fewer fewest**] *determiner, adjective, pronoun* *BrE* [fju:]^а *NAmE* [fju:]^а

determiner, adjective (**fewer**, **few-est**)

1. used with plural nouns and a plural verb to mean 'not many'

- Few people understand the difference.
- There seem to be fewer tourists around this year.
- Very few students learn Latin now.

2. (*usually* **a few**) used with plural nouns and a plural verb to mean 'a small number', 'some'

- We've had a few replies.
- I need a few things from the store.
- **Quite a few** people are going to arrive early.
- I try to visit my parents **every few weeks** .

Word Origin:

Old English fēawe, fēawa, of Germanic origin; related to Old High German *fao*, from an Indo-European root shared by Latin *paucus* and Greek *pauros* 'small'.

Idioms: ↑few and far between ▪ ↑have had a few ▪ ↑quite a few

pronoun

1. not many people, things or places

- Very few of his books are worth reading.
- You can pass with **as few as** 25 points.
- (*formal*) Few will argue with this conclusion.

2. **a few** a small number of people, things or places; some

- I recognized a few of the other people.
- I've seen most of his movies. Only a few are as good as his first one.
- Could you give me a few more details?

3. **fewer** not as many as

- Fewer than 20 students passed all the exams.
- There are **no fewer than** 100 different species in the area. Look at the note at **less**.

4. **the few** used with a plural verb to mean 'a small group of people'

- Real power belongs to the few.
- She was one of **the chosen few** (= the small group with special rights) .

Word Origin:

Old English *fēawe*, *fēawa*, of Germanic origin; related to Old High German *fao*, from an Indo-European root shared by Latin *paucus* and Greek *pauros* 'small' .

See also: ↑good few

few

Longman DOCE 5th Ed. (En-En)

few **S1 W1** /fjuː/ **BrE** ^ˈ **AmE** ^ˈ *determiner, pronoun, adjective* (comparative **fewer**, superlative **fewest**)

[Language: Old English; Origin: feawa]

1. [no comparative] a small number of things or people

a few

- I have to buy a few things at the supermarket.
- Pam called to say she's going to be a few minutes late.
- There were a few people sitting at the back of the hall.
- There are a few more things I'd like to discuss.

few of

- I've read a few of her books.
- I could suggest many different methods, but anyway, here are just a few.
- There are only a very few (=not many) exceptions.

the last/next few

- The office has been closed for the last few days.

every few days/weeks etc

- The plants need to be watered every few days.

the/sb's few days/weeks etc

- She had enjoyed her few days in Monaco.

2. **quite a few/a good few/not a few** a fairly large number of things or people:

- She must have cooked a good few dinners over the years.

quite a few/a good few/not a few of

- There were hundreds of protesters, not a few of whom were women.

3. not many or hardly any people or things **OPP many**:

- low-paid jobs that few people want
- Many people expressed concern, but few were willing to help.
- The team that makes the fewest mistakes usually wins.

few of

- Very few of the staff come from the local area.
- Mr Wingate was full of explanations, but precious few (=hardly any) of them made sense.

the few

- The cathedral was one of the few buildings not destroyed in the war.
- This hospital is one of the few that are equipped to provide transplant surgery.

sb's few belongings/friends etc

- I gathered together my few possessions.

4. **no fewer than** used to emphasize that a number is large:

- I tried to contact him no fewer than ten times.

5. **as few as 5/10 etc** used to emphasize how surprisingly small a number is:

- Sometimes as few as 20 out of 500 or more candidates succeed in passing all the tests.

6. **to name/mention but a few** used when you are mentioning only a small number of people or things as examples of a large group:

- This is a feature of languages such as Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese, to name but a few.

7. **the (privileged/chosen) few** the small number of people who are treated better than others and have special advantages:

- Such information is made available only to the chosen few.
- The needs of the many have been ignored – instead, the priority has been to bring benefits only to the few.

8. **be few and far between** to be rare:

- Jobs are few and far between at the moment.

9. **have had a few (too many) informal** to have drunk too much alcohol:

- He looks as if he's had a few!

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GRAMMAR

A few and **few** are used before plural nouns.

A few means 'a small number':

- It will take a few minutes.

Few means 'not many'. It emphasizes how small the number is. It is mainly used in writing or formal speech:

▪ Few people knew he was ill.

In conversation or informal writing, it is more usual to say **not many**:

▪ Not many people saw what happened.

few

Freakuency Pack

12500 **368**^{MCW}

15000 **186**^{COCA}

RANGE: **1k** FEW 225743

few 206041

fewer 19105

fewest 597

COCA 500k Unlemmatized

88534 **171**²⁰⁶⁰⁰⁸ *da2*

21 **171510**²¹ *nn1*

8 **293899**⁸ *nnu*

4 **427732**⁴ *jj*