Click to prove you're human

When it comes to mastering the English language, some words can cause a bit more trouble than others. Take much and many, for example. They both talk about quantities, but picking the right one isn't always straightforward. It's like trying to choose between two very similar shades of blue; you know they're not the same, but it's hard to pinpoint why. This article is going to clear up that confusion once and for all. By the end, knowing when to use much vs. many will seem as easy as pie. But before we lay down the rules, let's tease a little curiosity. What if I told you that using these words correctly could make your English sound much more natural? Well, stick around because you're about to find out exactly how. The main difference between much and many lies in the type of nouns they describe. Much is used with uncountable nouns, which are things we cannot count individually, like 'water', 'sand', or 'love'. For example, we say "How much water do you drink a day?" On the other hand, many is used with countable nouns. These are items you can count, such as 'books', 'cars', or 'people'. So, we would ask "How many books have you read this month?" Remembering this simple rule will help you use these words correctly in sentences. Understanding "Many" and "Much" in English Grammar English language learners often encounter confusion when using the determiners "many" and "much" in different contexts. Although both terms are used to quantify nouns, they apply to distinct types of nouns, with "many" employed for countable plural nouns and "much" for uncountable singular nouns. Many refers to a large number of items that one can count and is typically used with plural, countable nouns such as properties, days, and students. This determiner emphasizes the multiplicity of the nouns it accompanies. For example: There are many birds in the sky. She has many friends at school. Conversely, much is used for nouns that are uncountable, such as money, profit, fun, and sleep. This determiner highlights the great amount or degree of the subject in question. For instance: He doesn't have much experience in marketing. We didn't get much sleep last night. Recognizing the differences between these usages is essential for clear and effective communication in English. Tools like Ginger can help you confidently write by guiding the proper application of "much" and "many" through exercises and practical writing assistance. Related: Ingrained or Engrained – What Is the Difference?Here are some tips to help you better understand the use of "many" and "much" with plural and singular nouns: Identify whether the noun is countable or uncountable. If it is countable, consider using "many." If it is uncountable, opt for "much." Pay attention to the context. Sometimes, nouns can be both countable and uncountable, depending on the situation. Practice makes perfect. Regularly engage in exercises that challenge you to differentiate between "many" and "much" based on the countability of nouns. By consistently practicing and applying the correct usage of "many" and "much" in your everyday English communication, you will develop a stronger command of determiners in English and enhance your overall language skills. The Simple Rule: Countable vs. Uncountable Nouns In English grammar, understanding the distinction between countable and uncountable nouns is essential to use the determiners "many" and "much" correctly. This section explores the characteristics of both countable and uncountable nouns and their application with "many" and "much" in different contexts. Identifying Countable Nouns for "Many" Countable nouns, as their name suggests, are those nouns that can be enumerated and therefore have plural forms. Examples include vehicles, pets, cups, and cities. When a significant number of countable nouns need to be expressed, "many" is the appropriate determiner to use. The word "many" is typically followed by nouns that are inherently plural, emphasizing their countable nature. For instance, saying, "The charity has received many donations this month," highlights the use of "many" with the countable noun "donations." Understanding Uncountable Nouns for "Much" Contrarily, uncountable nouns cannot be individually counted and always remain in their singular form. These nouns include mass nouns like water, information, love, and time. When describing a large quantity of an uncountable noun, "much" should be used, as it is specifically designed for singular and non-count nouns. A relevant example would be, "She has gained much knowledge studying at the university." Distinguishing Between Singular and Plural Applications One of the most critical factors in determining whether to use "many" or "much" is the noun's plurality. If the noun is plural and countable, "many" is the appropriate choice. In contrast, if the noun is singular and uncountable, "much" should be used. Keep in mind that the plurality of the noun directly influences these quantifiers' usage. Many: Necessitates a plural and countable noun. Much: Connected to singular and uncountable nouns. In some cases, nouns like milk, sugar, or fruit can be measured or divided into types or units. The expression may change, allowing "many" to quantify nouns that would generally fall under the "much" category, such as cups of milk or types of fruit. In these situations, it is crucial to consider the context and whether the noun is being used as a countable or uncountable entity. Related: Fourth or Forth: Unpacking the ConfusionBy grasping the distinctions between countable and uncountable nouns as well as understanding noun plurality, you'll be better equipped to determine when to use "many" and "much" correctly in your writing and communication. Practical Examples of "Many" and "Much" in Use Understanding the difference between many and much is essential for clear and effective communication in English. To provide a better understanding of how these quantifiers are used in practice, let's look at some real-life examples that demonstrate their correct application in various sentence constructions. "Jennifer donated many books to the local library." In this case, many is used to describe the countable noun "books". As books can be counted individually, it is appropriate to use many for quantifying the quantity of books donated by Jennifer. "Anthony couldn't drink much coffee this morning." Here, much is employed with the uncountable noun "coffee". Since coffee is a liquid and cannot be quantified by individual units, much is the correct choice for describing the amount of coffee consumed by Anthony. Additional examples: There were many tourists at the museum today. (countable noun: tourists) I didn't get much sleep last night. (uncountable noun: sleep) Stacy has many friends in New York City. (countable noun: friends) The restaurant didn't receive much praise from the critics. (uncountable noun: praise) These examples illustrate the importance of correctly using many and much in everyday language, allowing you to communicate more effectively and confidently with other English speakers. By practicing and becoming familiar with these quantifiers in English sentences, you'll further develop your language skills and enhance your overall communication. Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them The journey toward mastering English grammar involves identifying and learning from common mistakes. One frequent error is the misapplication of "many" and "much" with nouns that can be either countable or uncountable. Let's now discuss some examples and strategies to navigate these potentially confusing scenarios. Mixed Nouns: When to Use "Many" vs. "Much" Some nouns, such as "dessert", can be both countable and uncountable depending on the context they are used in. When not specifying types or varieties, "dessert" appears as an uncountable and singular noun, requiring the use of "much" as its determiner: I don't eat much dessert. However, when referring to different kinds or specific portions of dessert, the noun becomes countable and plural, calling for "many" instead: There were so many desserts to choose from. Developing a sharp awareness of context is crucial for using "many" and "much" correctly with mixed nouns. The following tips can help you avoid common mistakes and achieve better language proficiency: Identify the noun type: Determine if the noun you are working with is countable or uncountable in the specific context and adjust the use of "many" or "much" accordingly. Look for clues in the surrounding sentence: The presence of words like the plural "s" or a reference to quantity, subgroup, or specific type of the noun might signal whether "many" or "much" should be used. Practice regularly: Engage in exercises and activities that help you apply the correct usage of "many" and "much" within different contexts, like constructing example sentences with mixed nouns. Related: Simple vs. Easy? What's the Difference?By understanding the context, distinctions between countable and uncountable mixed nouns, and how they influence the use of "many" and "much", you can avoid grammatical errors and become more proficient in English. Enhancing Your Language Skills: Tools and Tips Improving language skills involves understanding the nuances of grammar, including the correct usage of quantifiers like "many" and "much". To aid in this process, there are language improvement tools and grammar enhancement tips that can be of great assistance. Using such tools and tips can lead to fluent and error-free communication in English, making your life easier in both professional and personal areas. One significant resource at your disposal is LanguageTool, which offers features that not only check for the correct application of these terms but also provide grammatical corrections and suggestions for stylistic improvements. Moreover, consider using Ginger as a complementary tool for gaining a deeper understanding of English grammar through exercises and practical writing assistance. These tools come in handy for refining your writing and ensuring a higher level of readability. Another effective method to reinforce your understanding of "many" and "much" is practicing through exercises that require users to decide between these quantifiers based on noun countability. Continually practicing and immersing yourself in the English language will lead to increased proficiency and familiarity with these critical grammatical constructs. Stay proactive in your language improvement efforts, and you'll see your English skills progress significantly. Meanings Synonyms Sentences Amounting to or consisting of a large indefinite number. Consisting of some large, indefinite number (of persons or things); numerous. Relatively numerous (preceded by as, too, etc.) A large number (of persons or things) The majority of the people; the masses. A large indefinite number. A good many of the workers had the flu. A collective mass of people. Democracy must balance the rights of the few against the will of the many.A great many do not understand this. An indefinite large number of. Many people enjoy playing chess; there are many different ways to cook a meal. The same number of: moved three times in as many years. a relatively large number (of persons or things) an extremely large number (of persons or things) the same number of to read ten books in as many days be (one) too many for someone to be more, stronger, etc. than someone can defeat or successfully deal with More idioms definitions (3) The noun is from Middle English manye, *menye, from Old English manigeo, menigu ("company, multitude, host"), from Proto-Germanic *managō, *managī ("multitude"), from the same root as the determiner. Cognate with Middle Low German menige, menie, menje ("multitude"). From Wiktionary From Middle English many, mani, moni, from Old English maniÄ¡, moniÄ¡, maneÄ¡ ("many"), from Proto-Germanic *managaz ("some, much, many"), from Proto-Indo-European *monogÊ°o- ("many"). From Wiktionary Middle English from Old English manig menegh- in Indo-European roots From American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 5th Edition Browse#aabbccddeeffgghhiijjkkllmmnnooppqqrrsstuuvvwwxxyyzzAboutCareersContact usCookies, terms, & privacyHelpFollow usGet the Word of the Day every day!© 2025 Dictionary.com, LLC adjective (2)noun (2)pronoun (1)a large or considerable number of persons or things.A good many of the beggars were blind.the many, the greater part of humankind.many persons or things.Many of the beggars were blind. Many were unable to attend.a large number of(as pronoun; functioning as plural)each of a considerable number ofa great number ofas many apples as you liketoo many clouds to see(as pronoun; functioning as plural)"Collins English Dictionary — Complete & Unabridged" 2012 Digital Edition © William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979, 1986 © HarperCollins Publishers 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012the majority of mankind, esp the common people Compare fewthe many are kept in ignorance while the few prosper"Collins English Dictionary — Complete & Unabridged" 2012 Digital Edition © William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979, 1986 © HarperCollins Publishers 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012Origin of many1First recorded before 900; Middle English mani, meni, Old English manig, menig; akin to Old Saxon, Old High German manag, menig, Danish mange, Gothic managsOrigin of many1Old English manig; related to Old Frisian manich, Middle Dutch menech, Old High German managMany, innumerable, manifold, numerous imply the presence or succession of a large number of units. Many is a popular and common word for this idea: many times. Numerous, a more formal word, refers to a great number or to very many units: letters too numerous to mention. Innumerable denotes a number that is beyond count or, more loosely, that is extremely difficult to count: the innumerable stars in the sky. Manifold implies not only that the number is large but also that there is variety or complexity.Examples have not been reviewed.Experts told The Times the data confirm what many advocates and officials say: that most of the arrests carried out are on the street."I do so many concerts, they all blend into one."The ongoing ICE sweeps taking place across Los Angeles and the country have underscored the many challenges faced by immigrant communities.But there's no mistaking, in Arenas' mind, how fortunate he is to have survived — and how many things had to go right for that to be the case.The scandal has been described as the biggest miscarriage of justice in British legal history, but many victims are still waiting for financial redress, despite government pledges to speed up payouts.Manx shearwatermany aBrowse#aabbccddeeffgghhiijjkkllmmnnooppqqrrsstuuvvwwxxyyzzAboutCareersContact usCookies, terms, & privacyHelpFollow usGet the Word of the Day every day!© 2025 Dictionary.com, LLC Manyadjectivecomp. more, superl. most.Etymology: mænig , Saxon.1. Consisting of a great number; numerous; more than few. Our enemy, and the destroyers of our country, slew many of us. Judg. xvi. 24. When many atoms descend in the air, the same cause which makes them be many, makes them be light in proportion to their multitude. Kenelm Digby, on the Soul. The apostles never give the least directions to Christians to appeal to the bishop of Rome for a determination of the many differences which, in those times, happened among them. John Tillotson, Sermons.2. Marking number indefinite. Both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, brought bracelets. Exod. xxxv. 22.3. Powerful; with too, and in low language. They come to vie power and expence with those that are too high, and too many, for them. Roger L'Estrange, Fables.ManynounEtymology: This word is remarkable in the Saxon for its frequent use, being written with twenty variations: mænegeo, mænego, mænigeo, mænigo, mænigu, mænio, mæniu, mængeo, manegeo, manigu, manige, manigo, menegeo, menego, menegu, menigeo, menigo, menigu, menio, meniu.1. A multitude; a company; a great number; people. After him the rascal many ran,Heaped together in rude rabblement. Fairy Queen. O thou fond many! with what loud applauseDid'st thou beat heav'n with blessing Bolingbroke. William Shakespeare. I had a purpose nowTo lead our many to the holy land;Lest rest and lying still might make them lookToo near into my state. William Shakespeare, Henry IV. A care-craz'd mother of a many children. William Shakespeare. The vulgar and the many are fit only to be led or driven, but by no means fit to guide themselves. Robert South, Sermons. There parting from the king the chiefs divide,And wheeling East and West, before their many ride. Dryd. He is liable to a great many inconveniences every moment of his life. John Tillotson, Sermons. Seeing a great many in rich gowns, he was amazed to find that persons of quality were up so early. Joseph Addison, Freeholder.2. Many, when it is used before a singular noun, seems to be a substantive. Thou art a collop of my flesh,And for thy sake have I shed many a tear. William Shakespeare. He is beset with enemies, the meanest of which is not without many and many a way to the wreaking of a malice. Roger L'Estrange, Fables. Broad were their collars too, and every oneWas set about with many a costly stone. Dryden. Many a child can have the distinct clear ideas of two and three long before he has any idea of infinite. John Locke.3. Many is used much in composition. See also: Many and -mány English edit English Wikipedia has an article on:manyWikipedia Alternative forms edit Etymology edit From Middle English many, mani, moni, from Old English maniġ, moniġ, maneġ ("many"), from Proto-West Germanic *manag, from Proto-Germanic *managaz ("some, much, many"). The noun is from Middle English manye, *menye, from Old English manigeo, menigu ("company, multitude, host"), from Proto-West Germanic *managu, *managī, from Proto-Germanic *managō, *managī ("multitude"), from the same root as the determiner. Cognate with Middle Low German menige, menie, menje ("multitude"), Russian много (mnogo), Serbo-Croatian mnogo. Pronunciation edit Determiner edit many (comparative more, superlative most) before a countable noun: A large, indefinite number of. Synonym: numerous Antonyms: a couple of, a few, a handful of, several; one; no, zero Hypernyms: multiple, various Hyponym: countless Not many such people enjoyed playing chess. There are very many different ways to cook a meal. 1864–65, Charles Dickens, chapter 15, in Our Mutual Friend:I did it in a moment of conceit and folly—one of my many such moments—one of my many such hours—years. 2013 July 6, "The rise of smart beta", in The Economist, volume 408, number 8843, page 68:Investors face a quandary. Cash offers a return of virtually zero in many developed countries; government-bond yields may have risen in recent weeks but they are still unattractive. Equities have suffered two big bear markets since 2000 and are wobbling again. It is hardly surprising that pension funds, insurers and endowments are searching for new sources of return. before a countable noun: (in combinations such as 'as many', 'so many', 'this many') Used to indicate, demonstrate or compare the number of people or things. We don't need this many bananas. Put some back. There may be as many as ten million species of insect. I don't have as many friends as my sister does. Usage notes edit Many is used only with the plural of countable nouns (except in the combination many a). Its counterpart used with uncountable nouns is much. Many and much merge in the comparative and superlative forms, which are more and most for both determiners. It was once common to use the indefinite article with many (very a many years ago), as it still is with few (a few good men). However, this has fallen out of favor except in formations such as "a great/good many." Synonyms edit Antonyms edit Derived terms edit Translations edit Pronoun edit many A large, indefinite number of people or things. Many are called, but few are chosen. 1921, Ben Travers, chapter 4, in A Cuckoo in the Nest, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Company, published 1925, →OCLC:By some paradoxical evolution rancour and intolerance have been established in the vanguard of primitive Christianity. Mrs. Spoker, in common with many of the stricter disciples of righteousness, was as inclement in demeanour as she was cadaverous in aspect. 1909, Archibald Marshall [pseudonym; Arthur Hammond Marshall], chapter III, in The Squire's Daughter, New York, N.Y.: Dodd, Mead and Company, published 1919, →OCLC:The big houses, and there are a good many of them, lie for the most part in what may be called by courtesy the valleys. You catch a glimpse of them sometimes at a little distance from the [railway] line, which seems to have shown some ingenuity in avoiding them, […]. Antonyms edit Derived terms edit many-to-many many-to-one one-to-many edit Translations edit Noun edit many (plural (rare) manies) Translations edit Adjective edit many (comparative more, superlative most) Existing in large number; numerous. 2008 January/February, James Fallows, "The $1.4 Trillion Question", in The Atlantic Monthly[1]:Let's take these fears about a rich, strong China to their logical extreme. The U.S. and Chinese governments are always disagreeing—about trade, foreign policy, the environment. Someday the disagreement could be severe. Taiwan, Tibet, North Korea, Iran—the possibilities are many, though Taiwan always heads the list. Synonyms edit multiple, several; see also Thesaurus:manifold See also edit References edit "many", in OneLook Dictionary Search. Anagrams edit Maricopa edit Pronoun edit many Turkmen edit Etymology edit Borrowed from Arabic مَعْنًى (maʿnā). Pronunciation edit This entry needs pronunciation information. If you are familiar with the IPA then please add some! Noun edit many (definite accusative manyny, plural manylar) Declension edit Further reading edit "many" in Enedilim.com "many" in Webonary.org Yola edit Etymology edit From Middle English mani, from Old English maniġ, from Proto-West Germanic *manag. Pronunciation edit Adjective edit many many 1867, "A YOLA ZONG", in SONGS, ETC. IN THE DIALECT OF FORTH AND BARGY, number 6, page 86:Many a bra draught by Tommeen was ee-maate;Many a brave stroke by Tommy was made; References edit Jacob Poole (d. 1827) (before 1828) William Barnes, editor, A Glossary, With some Pieces of Verse, of the old Dialect of the English Colony in the Baronies of Forth and Bargy, County of Wexford, Ireland, London: J. Russell Smith, published 1867, page 86 WordReference Random House Learner's Dictionary of American English © 2025man•y /ˈmɛni/USA pronunciation adj., more/mɔr/USA pronunciation most /moʊst/USA pronunciation n., pron. adj. forming a large number; numerous:[before a plural noun]many people. noting each one of a large number:[~ + a + singular countable noun]For many a day it rained. n. [countable] a large number of persons or things:[a + adjective + ~ + of the + plural noun]A good many of the beggars were blind. the many, [plural* used with a plural verb] the greater part of humankind:The needs of the many outweighed the needs of the few. pron. [used with a plural verb] many persons or things:Many were unable to attend. Many of us dislike your new policies. Idioms Idioms many a time, again and again; frequently. WordReference Random House Unabridged Dictionary of American English © 2025man•y (men′ē),USA pronunciation adj., more, most, n., pron. adj. constituting or forming a large number; numerous:many people. noting each one of a large number (usually fol. by a or an):For many a day it rained. n. a large or considerable number of persons or things:A good many of the beggars were blind. the many, the greater part of humankind. pron. many persons or things:Many of the beggars were blind. Many were unable to attend. bef. 900; Middle English mani, meni, Old English manig, menig; akin to Old Saxon, Old High German manag, menig, Danish mange, Gothic managS 1. multifarious, multitudinous, myriad; divers, sundry, various. Many, innumerable, manifold, numerous imply the presence or succession of a large number of units. Many is a popular and common word for this idea:many times.Numerous, a more formal word, refers to a great number or to very many units:letters too numerous to mention.Innumerable denotes a number that is beyond count or, more loosely, that is extremely difficult to count:the innumerable stars in the sky.Manifold implies not only that the number is large but also that there is variety or complexity. Collins Concise English Dictionary © HarperCollins Publishers:: many /ˈmɛnɪ/ determiner sometimes preceded by a great or a good: a large number of: many coaches, many times (as pronoun; functioning as plural): many are seated alreadyfollowed by a, an, or another, and a singular noun: each of a considerable number of: many a manpreceded by as, too, that, etc: a great number of: as many apples as you like, too many clouds to see (as pronoun; functioning as plural): I have as many as you n the many ⇒ the majority of humankind, esp ordinary peopleCompare few See also more, mostEtymology: Old English manig; related to Old Frisian manich, Middle Dutch menech, Old High German manag WordReference Random House Learner's Dictionary of American English © 2025more /mɔr/USA pronunciation adj., [comparative of] much or many with most as superlative. in greater quantity, amount, or number:I need more money. She had more coins than I did. additional or further:Do you need more time? n. [uncountable] an additional quantity, amount, or number:Would you like more? a greater quantity, amount, or degree:The price is more than I thought. Their report is more than just a survey. pron. a greater number of persons or of a specified class: [used with a plural verb]More have been injured than ever. adv., [compar. of much with most as superl.] in or to a greater extent or degree:[often used before adjectives and adverbs, and regularly before those of more than two syllables]Things have become more interesting. The car moved more slowly. in addition; further; again:Let's talk more tomorrow. Idioms Idioms more and more, to an increasing extent or degree: I love you more and more every day. Idioms more or less, to some extent; somewhat:We came to more or less the same conclusion. what is more, (used to introduce information that supports the truth of what has been said):This airline is terrible: the planes are always late and what is more, they're hot and uncomfortable. WordReference Random House Learner's Dictionary of American English © 2025most /moʊst/USA pronunciation adj., [superlative of] much or many with more as comparative.[before a noun] in the greatest number, amount, or degree: [before a plural noun]:[the + ~]He received the most votes. [before a uncountable noun]:She has the most talent. in the majority of instances; more than half:[before a plural noun]Most operations are successful. n. [uncountable] the greatest quantity, amount, or degree:[the + ~]The most I can hope for is a passing grade. the greatest number or greater part of what is specified:[~ + of]Most of his writing is rubbish. the greatest number:[the + ~]The most this room will seat is 150. the majority of persons:to be happier than most. Slang Terms the most, the very best of something:thought her boyfriend was the most. adv., [superl. of much with more as compar.] in or to the greatest extent or degree:[often used before adjectives and adverbs, and regularly before those of more than two syllables]most rapid; She behaved most wisely;He worked most carefully. very:This murder is a most puzzling case. [Informal.]almost or nearly:Most everyone around here shops at this place. Idioms Idioms at (the) most, at the maximum:Jog for one hour at (the) most. Idioms for the most part, on the whole; generally; usually:For the most part we walked, but occasionally we biked. Idioms make the most of, [~ + object] to use to greatest advantage:Make the most of your opportunities. WordReference Random House Unabridged Dictionary of American English © 2025more (môr, mōr),USA pronunciation adj., [compar. of] much [or] many [with] most [as superl.] in greater quantity, amount, measure, degree, or number:I need more money. additional or further:Do you need more time? More discussion seems pointless. n. an additional quantity, amount, or number:I would give you more if I had it. He likes her all the more. When I could take no more of such nonsense, I left. a greater quantity, amount, or degree:More is expected of him. The price is more than I thought. something of greater importance:His report is more than a survey. (used with a pl. v.) a greater number of a class specified, or the greater number of persons:More will attend this year than ever before. adv. [compar. of much with most as superl.] in or to a greater extent or degree (in this sense often used before adjectives and adverbs, and regularly before those of more than two syllables, to form comparative phrases having the same force and effect as the comparative degree formed by the termination -er):more interesting; more slowly. in addition; further; longer; again:Let's talk more another time. We couldn't stand it any more. moreover. Idiomsmore and more, to an increasing extent or degree; gradually more:They became involved more and more in stock speculation. more or less: Idiomsto some extent; somewhat:She seemed more or less familiar with the subject. Idiomsabout; in substance; approximately:We came to more or less the same conclusion. bef. 900; Middle English; Old English māra; cognate with Old High German mēro, Old Norse meiri, Gothic maiza. See most more′ness, n. More (môr, mōr),USA pronunciation n. BiographicalHannah, 1745–1833, English writer on religious subjects. BiographicalPaul Elmer, 1864–1937, U.S. essayist, critic, and editor. BiographicalSir Thomas, 1478–1535, English humanist, statesman, and author: canonized in 1935. Mo•ré (mə rā′),USA pronunciation n. Language VarietiesMossi (def. 2). WordReference Random House Unabridged Dictionary of American English © 2025most (mōst),USA pronunciation adj., [superl. of much or many with more as compar.] in the greatest quantity, amount, measure, degree, or number:to win the most votes. in the majority of instances:Most operations are successful. greatest, as in size or extent:the most talent. Idiomsfor the most part. See part (def. 18). n. the greatest quantity, amount, or degree; the utmost:The most I can hope for is a passing grade. the greatest number or the majority of a class specified:Most of his writing is rubbish. the greatest number:The most this room will seat is 150. the majority of persons:to be more sensitive than most. Idiomsat the most, at the maximum. Also, at most. Idiomsmake the most of, to use to greatest advantage; utilize fully:to make the most of an opportunity. Slang Termsthe most, the ultimate in something:He's the most. That movie was the most. adv., [superl. of much with more as compar.] in or to the greatest extent or degree (in this sense often used before adjectives and adverbs, and regularly before those of more than two syllables, to form superlative phrases having the same force and effect as the superlative degree formed by the termination -est):most rapid; most wisely. very:a most puzzling case. Informal Termsalmost or nearly. bef. 900; Middle English most(e), Old English mǣst; replacing Middle English mest(e), Old English mǣst; cognate with German meist, Gothic maists. See more 14. The adverb most, a shortened form of almost, is far from being either a recent development or an Americanism. It goes back to the 16th century in England, where it is now principally a dialect form. In American English it occurs before such pronouns as all, anyone, anybody, everyone, and everybody; the adjectives all, any, and every; and adverbs like anywhere and everywhere: Most everyone around here is related to everyone else. You can find that plant most anywhere. This use of most is often objected to, but it is common in the informal speech of educated persons. It is less common in edited writing except in representations of speech. -most, a combining form of most occurring in a series of superlatives:foremost; utmost. Middle English -most; replacing Middle English, Old English -mest, double superlative suffix, equivalent. to -ma superlative suffix (as in Old English forma first; compare Latin prīmus) + -est1; later identified with most