

stuff

Stuff is an informal word that means 'things'. We often use the word **things** or **stuff** instead of naming the objects, material or idea that we're referring to.

'Thing' is *countable* while **stuff** is *uncountable*:

1) "Whose are all these things?" 2) "Whose is all this stuff?"

a) "We left all our **stuff** in the car while we went to look for a hotel room."

Stuff means 'personal possessions' or 'luggage' in this example.

b) "Let's go to an English restaurant - I hate all this foreign **stuff**!"

Stuff means 'food' in this example.

Ron: Can't we go home now, Alan? It's getting late.

Alan: Forget it. We've still got loads of stuff left to do. This job has to be ready by noon tomorrow.

Kim: Dan? Do you know where Craig is?

Dan: He's upstairs watching a Die Hard movie.

Kim: Don't you think he's a bit too young to watch that kind of stuff?

Ron: Where's all the stuff I left here on my desk?

Ted: In your filing-cabinet. The boss asked me to file it away.

What do you call the stuff you:

a) Put on a bicycle chain

b) Clean your teeth with

c) Use when you have dry skin

*Do you usually take much stuff with you when you go on holiday? -
Too much stuff?*

However, there is no clear rule: sometimes you will read “website”, and sometimes “web-site” and even “web site”.

4) Compounds made up of two *nouns* are normally used instead of having to make a longer preposition phrase: *shop window* (the window of the shop), *summer holidays* (holidays in summer) or *birthday party* (party for a birthday).

5) We can make compounds *adjectives* and we write these with hyphens: *wet-look gel*, *top-of-the-range model*, *see-through plastic*.

6) Another way of forming compounds is with *numbers*, for example a *two-star* hotel. When we make compounds with numbers, the number part of the compound (*two-star*) becomes an adjective therefore we don't make it plural - a *two-star* hotel, not a two stars hotel, although we do say, “that hotel has two stars.”

With *number compounds* we put the *stress* on the number part, not the noun part.

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|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| a two-hour play | - | a play that lasts two hours |
| a three-hour flight | - | a flight that lasts three hours |
| a ten-mile walk | - | a walk of ten miles |
| a six-week-old kitten | - | a kitten that's six weeks old |
| a ten-cent coin. | - | a coin of the value of ten cents. |
| a six-person apartment | - | an apartment for six people |

- “The Government presented their six-point plan for the economy.”
- “This device has a 2-giga memory.”
- “At present we have a five-month waiting list.”
- “This book is the fifth in a nine-part series.”
- “The All-Blacks begin their six-nation European tour in Italy tomorrow.”

In *rules* and *instructions* **must** is often used in the *passive*.

- Forms **must be filled in** using block capitals.
- Tickets **must be purchased** before boarding.

e) We also use **must** (not **have to**) when we say what we think is very probably true because we see a situation or the results of a situation.

Brian: Hello, Mum.

Kate: Hello, Brian. How was your journey?

Brian: Long!

Kate: Yes, you must be really tired.

Ron: The lights are still on in Pat's office.

Ted: He **must** be still working. I know he's got a lot to do.

John: Those clients **have been** waiting to speak to Mrs Seaman for almost half an hour.

Claire: I know. They **must** be getting pretty angry by now. Has anyone gone to apologise to them?

We can use **must** in this way when we talk about something that happened in the *past* with the construction **must + have + past participle**, or **must + have + been + ing form**

Bill: What happened to your face?

Jake: I got hit playing tennis.

Bill: By a ball?

Jake: No, With a racket.

Bill: Wow! That **must** have hurt.

Ann: How come the Thompson's are so late? They haven't even phoned to let us know.

Kate: Well, they **must** have forgotten about it. Never mind – let's just start dinner without them.