

Time as a countable and uncountable noun

The word time has both countable and uncountable uses.

When we talk about the amount of time (number of hours/days etc.) required to complete something, time is usually uncountable.

How much time do we need to paint the walls? (NOT How many time do we need...?)

We took quite some time to put the child to bed.

Hurry up - we haven't got enough time.

The project was a complete waste of time and money.

In expressions like a long time or a short time, the word time is used as a countable noun.

I took a long time to proofread the work.

When we talk about clock times, time is countable.

Five o'clock would be a great time to start.

I called him at various times yesterday.

When time is used without a preposition

Prepositions are often dropped before common expressions with time.

I'm busy right now. Can you come another time? (More natural than 'Can you come at another time?')

What time does the train leave? (More natural than 'At what time does the train leave?')

You can't fool me this time.

On time and in time

On time means 'at the planned time'. In time means 'with enough time to spare.'

It is important that the meeting start on time.

She would have died if they hadn't taken her to hospital in time.