

Demonstrative pronouns & the use of "there is/ there are"

Level: A1, A2

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

Demonstrative pronoun points towards the noun it replaces, indicating it in time, space, and distance. It can be singular or plural; it may be a near demonstrative, "this, that" or a far demonstrative, "that, those".

THIS AND THESE

"This" used in the singular, whereas "these" in plural.

use of "this" and "these"	example
to introduce people	Andy, this is Steve. These are my sisters, Brenda and Kate.
to talk about something being nearby	This chair is very comfortable. These trousers are narrow to me.
to talk about something occurring soon	We're having a class reunion this weekend.
to introduce oneself over the phone	Hello. This is Meg. Can I speak to Tom, please?

THAT AND THOSE

"That" used in the singular, whereas "those" in plural.

use of "this" and "these"	example
talk about something being far off	That house over there belongs to my family. Those people were aggressive.
talk about something being far away in time	Do you remember that winter of 1986?
confirm the identity of the person we cannot see	Is that you darling?

THAT'S GREAT!

We use "that" in many other expressions – answers to what one's said before:

Example:

I've bought a car at last! **That's** great!

So you're married? **That's** right!

FORM

We can use the structure "there is/ there are" in every of Simple Tenses and construction "be going to".

simple tense or construction	example
simple present	There's a huge spider in here!
simple past	There were five of them.
future simple	There will be lots of people, I think.
present perfect	There has been an accident.
be going to	There's going to be a concert here.

Affirmative sentences

The verb "to be" must match the form (singular or plural) of the noun that follows it.

There is/was appears in the singular:

Example:

There's a florist opposite the cinema.
There was a strong wind yesterday.
There's going to be a short break.

There are/were refers to nouns in the plural:

Example:

There are two banks in this village.
There were at least two people dead.
There are going to be many children there.

Questions

Questions are created by inverting a word order in a sentence:

Example:

There's some milk in the fridge.
Is there any milk in the fridge?

Example:

There were many policemen at the station.
Were there many policemen at the station?

To questions beginning with "Is/ Are/ Was/ Were there..." we should answer with short:

Yes, **there is** (was, are, were).

No, **there isn't** (wasn't, aren't, weren't).

Example:

Is there any soup left? No, **there isn't**.
Were there any Stephen King's books in the library? Yes, **there were**.

Negative sentences

We create negative sentences by adding "not" to the verb "to be":

Example:

There isn't much money left.
There won't be any time to buy sandwiches.

USAGE

We use the structure "there is" and "there are" when we want to say that something exists or is located in some place or time:

Example:

There were only a few houses in this town 200 years ago.
There are five apple trees in my garden.
There's a hole in your jacket.

This structure always introduces new information so that it cannot be used with the definite article "the", but only with the indefinite article "a/an", numeral or with the expression "some/any".

Example:

There's a new zebra in the zoo.
There are three chairs in this room.

Definite noun preceded by a particular article "the" function as a subject and do not require structure "there is/ are":

Example:

The new zebra is in its enclosure.

The three chairs were bought at the Teak Garden.