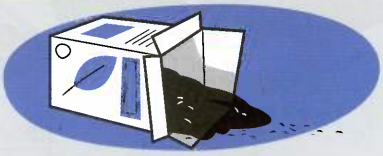
3 Countable and uncountable nouns (2)

1 Nouns that can be countable or uncountable

Some nouns have a countable meaning and an uncountable meaning:

COUNTABLE	UNCOUNTABLE
	
I'd like three teas, please. (cups of tea)	*Tea comes from China and India.* (drink)
My uncle has 25 chickens on his farm. (animals)	*I love chicken, it's delicious!* (food)
Would you like a chocolate? (one sweet)	*French chocolate is very good.* (food)
Can you buy a paper at the shop? (a newspaper)	*Paper is made from wood.* (material)
There are four Russians in my class. (people)	*Do you speak Russian?* (language)

2 Ways of counting uncountable nouns

We 'count' uncountable nouns like this:

UNITS
*a **piece of** cake/cheese*
*a **piece of** furniture/luggage/paper*
*a **bit of** information*
*a **bar of** chocolate*
*a **slice of** bread/toast/cake*
*a **loaf of** bread*

CONTAINERS
*a **carton of** milk/juice*
*a **can/tin of** soup*
*a **glass of** orange juice*
*a **box of** chocolates*
*a **cup of** coffee*
*a **bottle of** water*
*a **tube of** toothpaste*

MEASUREMENTS
*a **litre of** milk*
*half a **kilo of** sugar*
*six **metres of** cotton*

⚠ We don't use uncountable nouns with *a* or *an*:
✗ ~~*Can I have a toast?*~~
✓ *Can I have **a slice of toast?***

We can say:
*Would you like **some chocolate?*** or *Would you like **a bar of chocolate?***

When we talk about drinks like tea and coffee we can say:
*Would you like **some coffee?** Would you like **a cup of coffee?** Would you like **a coffee?***