

English Grammar – Existence (Advanced)

To talk about “existence” in English, we use the word “**there**” with a conjugation of the verb “**to be**”. Here are the possibilities:

1. there is, there are (*present simple*)
2. there was, there were, if there was, if there were (*past simple*)
3. there will be, there is going to be, there are going to be (*future simple*)
4. there has been, there have been (*present perfect*)
5. there had been (*past perfect*)
6. there will have been (*future perfect*)
7. there would be, there could be, there should be, there must be, there has to be, there have to be, there can be, there might be, there may be (*modal verbs*)
8. there would have been, there could have been, there should have been, there must have been, there might have been, there may have been (*past modal verbs*)
9. there be (*subjunctive*)
10. there to be (*second verb*)

Here are some examples:

1. **There is** a book on the table.
There are many books on the table.
2. Yesterday, **there was** a book on the table.
Yesterday, **there were** many books on the table.
If **there was** a book on the table, I didn't see it.
If **there were** many books on the table, I didn't see them.
3. Tomorrow, **there will be** a meeting in the office.
Tomorrow, **there is going to be** a meeting in the office.
Next week, **there are going to be** many meetings in the office.
4. **There has been** a delay in the vaccine delivery.
There have been many problems with the vaccine distribution.
5. John looked in the box. **There had been** some syringes, but they were not there.
6. **There will have been** many vaccines given by the end of the year.
7. If we had ordered more vaccines, **there would be** enough for everybody.
There could be a shortage of vaccines next month.
There should be enough vaccines for everybody.
There must be a mistake. My name isn't on the list.
There has to be a mistake. My name isn't on the list.
There have to be serious consequences to such malicious acts!
There can be one mistake. More are not allowed.
There might be a mistake. Please check the list again.
There may be a mistake. Please check the list again.
8. **There would have been** another option.
There could have been an accident.
There should have been a sign in the road.
There must have been a mistake. My account is never so low.
There might have been somebody in the house. I'm not sure.
There may have been somebody in the house. I'm not sure.
9. I suggested that **there be** 12 bottles of champagne at the reception tomorrow.
And God said: “Let **there be** light.”
10. I want **there to be** an investigation.
I didn't expect **there to be** so many people at the party.

Exercise 1. Complete the following sentences using “**there**” plus a conjugation of the verb “**to be**”. Sometimes, there is more than one possibility.

1. _____ a cat in the garden yesterday.
2. _____ many earthquakes in Japan.
3. Tomorrow, _____ a protest in the city center.
4. _____ always _____ crazy people in the world.
5. A: Is there any water in the tank?
B: Maybe. _____ enough for one shower. (*possibility*)
6. This mission is critical. _____ no mistakes!
7. A: Why have we stopped?
B: I'm not sure. _____ an accident ahead.
8. A: Is there a pharmacy near here?
B: _____ one just around the corner. (*certainly*)

A: Is there a pharmacy near here?
B: _____ one just around the corner. (*probably*)

A: Is there a pharmacy near here?
B: _____ one just around the corner. (*possibly*)
9. If _____ any mosquitoes on the planet, malaria wouldn't be a problem.
10. I demand that _____ an enquiry!

Exercise 2. Rewrite the following sentences as **negative sentences**.

1. _____ a cat in the garden yesterday.
2. _____ always _____ crazy people in the world.
3. Tomorrow, _____ a protest in the city center.

Exercise 3. Rewrite the following sentences as **questions**. Then, provide responses.

<u>Question</u>	<u>Response</u>
1. _____ a cat in the garden yesterday?	_____
2. _____ always _____ crazy people in the world?	_____
3. _____ a protest in the city center tomorrow?	_____

Exercise 4. Rewrite the following sentences using **tag questions**.

1. _____ a cat in the garden yesterday, _____ ?
2. _____ always _____ crazy people in the world, _____ ?
3. _____ a protest in the city center tomorrow, _____ ?

Extra note:

Since the verb “to be” demands a **gerund** in the second verb of a phrase, then this rule also applies to phrases about existence. For example:

- **There is** a cat **crying** loudly in the garden.
- Yesterday, **there was** a dog **barking** loudly in front of my house.
- If **there was** an animal **making** a lot of noise, I didn't hear it.
- Tomorrow, **there will be** a lot of people **singing** and **dancing** at the office party!
- **There has been** a man **drilling** outside my office for over ten minutes.

Exercise 5. Complete the following sentences using the given verb.

1. **There were** so many people _____ at the auction yesterday, that it was difficult to buy anything! (*to bid*)
2. Look – **there are** some deer _____ across the field. Aren't they beautiful? (*to run*)
3. **There will be** many aircraft _____ over our house tomorrow in celebration of the king's coronation. (*to fly*)

Recommended video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EesQolfp9gQ> (13 mins)