

English Vocabulary: small / little / short

1) small

The word '**small**' is used to describe the physical **size** of something.

Examples:

- He lives in a **small** apartment. (Opposite: He lives in a **big** apartment.)
- I have a **small** dog. (Opposite: I have a **big** dog.)

2) little / a little

The words '**little**' (negative connotation) and '**a little**' (positive connotation) are used to describe **adjectives** or **uncountable quantities**.

Examples:

Small quantity:

- I have **a little** money. (This is good.)
- I have **little** money. (This is not good.)
- She speaks **a little** German. (This is good.)
- She speaks **little** German. (This is not good.)

Adjective ('a little'):

- I am **a little** weak today.
- He is **a little** stubborn.

The opposite of '**little/a little**' is '**very**' (for adjectives) or '**much/a lot of**' (for quantity).

3) short

The word '**short**' is used to describe the **height** or **length** of something. It can also refer to **time**.

Examples:

- He is a **short** man. (Opposite: He is a **tall** man.)
- She always wears a **short** skirt. (Opposite: She always wears a **long** skirt.)
- I waited a **short** time for the bus. (Opposite: I waited a **long** time.)

Exercise. Complete with 'small', 'little', 'a little' or 'short':

- I would like a _____ pizza, please.
- Excuse me. I want to buy a _____ skirt.
- I am only _____ hungry, so I'll eat a couple of biscuits.
- I have _____ patience with children. They irritate me easily.
- Do you speak English? Yes, but only _____ .
- I have a small appetite, so I eat only _____ rice.
- Napoleon was a very _____ person.
- I can go out tonight, I have _____ money.
- I can't go out tonight, I have _____ money.