



## So and Such

We often use 'so' and 'such' to mean 'very' or 'really'. It makes the sentence stronger and shows that there is a high level of something.

We use 'so' before an adjective or adverb (without a noun).

- She was so beautiful (= she was very beautiful).
- He ran so quickly (= he ran very quickly).
- The food was so delicious (= the food was really delicious).
- The children spoke French so well (= the children spoke French very well).

We use 'such' before a noun or an adjective + a noun. If there is 'a' or 'an', it goes after 'such'.

- She was such a beautiful woman (= she was a very beautiful woman).
- NOT: ~~'she was a so beautiful woman'.~~
- NOT: ~~'she was a such beautiful woman'.~~
- He got such a good time in the race (= he got a very good time in the race).
- It was such delicious food (= it was really delicious food).
- The children spoke such good French (= the children spoke really good French).

When we use 'such' directly with a noun, it's often a noun that shows our opinion.

- He's such a genius! (= he's a real genius / he's very clever).
- You're such a teacher! (= you act in a typical way for a teacher).



We don't use a word like 'this' or 'those' or 'your' or 'his' before 'so' and 'such'. 'So' and 'such' come directly after the verb.

- NOT: ~~This so beautiful city.~~ (Instead say 'this city is so beautiful'.)
- NOT: ~~Your so helpful friend.~~ (Instead say 'your friend is so helpful'.)

We can use 'so ... that ...' and 'such ... that ...' to show that there is a certain result. (We can't use 'very' or 'really' in this way.)

- It was so cold that the pond froze (= because it was very cold, the pond froze).
- She felt so tired that she fell asleep on the train (= because she was very tired, she fell asleep on the train).
- It was such an expensive meal that he didn't spend any money for the rest of the month (= because it was a very expensive meal, he didn't spend any money for the rest of the month).
- They have such a lot of books that they need to store some of them in the garage (= because they have really a lot of books, they need to store some of them in the garage).

We can drop 'that' when we use 'so' and 'such' in this way.

- It was so cold the pond froze.
- She felt so tired she fell asleep on the train.
- It was such an expensive meal he didn't spend any money for the rest of the month.
- They have such a lot of books they need to store some of them in the garage!

We can use 'so' and 'such' to mean 'to this level' or 'as ... as this'.

- He isn't usually so late (= he isn't usually as late as this).
- I don't often drink such a lot of coffee (= I don't often drink as much coffee as this).



We use 'so' before 'much / many / little / few' with and without a noun. This shows that the amount is really a lot or really little. As usual, we use a plural noun after 'many' and 'few' and an uncountable noun after 'much' and 'little'.

- I ate so much.
- I ate so much cake.
- He had so many.
- He had so many books.
- Why did you eat so little?
- He had so few friends that he was very lonely.

We can use 'such' before 'a lot (of)'. Again, such comes before 'a'. (We sometimes see 'such a little + noun' but that is when 'little' is just a normal adjective: 'this is such a little flat'.)

- He has such a lot of books.
- I ate such a lot of cake.

Here are a few more idiomatic uses of 'such' and 'so' that are slightly different.

Such + noun = a certain type or kind of (this is quite formal)

- I'd never heard such music before. (= I'd never heard this kind of music before)

No such + noun = the noun doesn't exist

- Ghosts? There's no such thing!

And such / and so on = and more similar things

- He likes winter sports – snowboarding and skiing and such.
- He likes winter sports – snowboarding and skiing and so on.



As such (formal) = in the normal meaning of the word. We usually use this in the negative ('not as such')

- We're not going to have dinner as such, but there will be plenty of snacks. (= we're not going to have a normal dinner, but ...)
- A: Is Lucy your boss now? B: Not as such (= not exactly) but she does work for the same company.

Such as = for example / like

- A: We should get a film for tonight. B: Such as? (= please give an example of a film)
- Cities such as London are becoming more powerful politically (= cities like London ...).

So = a certain amount / size

- It was so big (= it was the size I'm showing you with my hands).
- There's only so much time (there's only a certain amount of time).

So = something that has already been said

- A: Is dinner ready? B: I hope so (= I hope that dinner is ready)
- Is that so? (= is that right?)

Or so = approximately

- I think there were fifty people or so at the party (= I think there were approximately fifty people at the party).

