

There is / there are

If we want to say that something exists or doesn't exist somewhere or at some time, we often use 'there + be'. It's often used to talk about something for the first time in a conversation.

- There's a cup on the table.
- There's a restaurant next to the station.
- There isn't any money in the house.
- There aren't any banks in this street.
- Is there a supermarket near here?
- Are there any potatoes in the cupboard?

In theory, we use 'there is + singular' and 'there are + plural'.

- There is a café in my village.
- There are two cafés in my village.

But we very, very often use there's + plural and singular when we're speaking. This is so common that it's not a mistake. We must use the short form here.

- There's a café in my village.
- There's two cafés in my village.

We can use 'there' with all tenses of be.

- There were many poor people in the 16th century.
- There won't be cake at the party.
- There have been a lot of accidents today.
- Will there be a train at 6pm?

- There hasn't been much rain recently.

We usually use 'there + be' with a / an / some / any / no / much / many / a lot of and other indefinite words. We don't usually use it with 'the' or proper names.

- There's a cat in the garden.
- ~~There's the cat in the garden.~~
- There's a boy at the door.
- ~~There's John at the door.~~