There was/there were

The phrases **"there was"** and **"there were"** are used to indicate the existence or presence of something in the past. "**There**" functions as a dummy subject, and the verb **"was"** or **"were"** agrees with the noun or pronoun that follows.

"There was" is used when referring to a singular noun or an uncountable noun.
For example:



- **There was** a cat in the garden. (singular noun)
- **There was** some milk in the fridge. (uncountable noun)

In these examples, "a cat" and "some milk" are the objects being referred to, and "was" agrees with the singular nature of the noun.

"There were" is used when referring to plural nouns.
For example:



- **There were** three cars in the parking lot.
- **There were** many people at the party.

In these examples, "three cars" and "many people" are plural nouns, and "were" agrees with the plural nature of the nouns.

"There was" can also be used when referring to a singular noun that represents a collective group.
For example:



- **There was** a team of players on the field.
- **There was** a crowd of protesters in the square.

In these examples, although "team" and "crowd" are singular nouns, they represent a collective group, so "was" is used.

The form questions, we use "**Was there**" and "**Were there**". For example:



Was there a book on the table?
Were there any birds in the tree?

In summary, **"there was"** is used for singular or uncountable nouns, **"there were"** is used for plural nouns, and **"there was"** can also be used for singular nouns representing a collective group.

There was/there were exercise 1:

Choose the correct answer.

1. _____ a cat on the roof.
a) There was
b) There were

2. _____ some milk in the glass.
a) There was
b) There were

3. _____ two apples in the basket.
a) There was
b) There were

4._____ a problem with the computer.
a) There was
b) There were

5. _____ a loud noise outside.
a) There was
b) There were

6. _____ some cookies in the jar.
a) There was
b) There were

7. _____ a lot of people at the concert.
a) There was
b) There were

8. _____ some water in the bottle.
a) There was
b) There were

9._____ a mistake in the report.
a) There was
b) There were

10. _____ some interesting books on the shelf.
a) There was
b) There were

There was/there were exercise 2:

Complete the conversation between Tim and Leo with either 'there was', 'there were', 'Was there' or 'Were there'.

Tim: How was the party last night?



Leo: It was amazing! **(1)**_____ a DJ playing great music, and **(2)**_____ colorful decorations everywhere.

Tim: (3)_____ a lot of people?

Leo: Yes, **(4)**_____! **(5)**_____ a big crowd, and everyone was having a great time.

Tim: (6)_____ any delicious food?



Leo: Absolutely! **(7)**_____ a buffet with a variety of tasty dishes, and **(8)**_____ a dessert table filled with tempting treats.

Tim: Sounds like a fun party! **(9)**_____ any memorable moments?

Leo: Oh, definitely! **(10)**_____ a surprise performance by a local band.

Tim: I wish I could have been there!

There was and there were: answer key

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Where two or more answers are given, any of them is correct.

Exercise 1

1. a) There was
2. a) There was
3. b) There were
4. a) There was
5. a) There was
6. b) There were
7. b) There were
8. a) There was
9. a) There was
10. b) There were

Exercise 2

(1) There was
(2) there were
(3) Were there
(4) there were
(5) There was
(6) Was there
(7) There was
(8) there was
(9) Were there
(10) There was