
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

English In A Minute

Few & A few



BBC
LEARNING
ENGLISH

This is not a word-for-word transcript

Saskia

Welcome everyone. Today we're going to look at the difference between **few** and **a few**.

Have a look at these two sentences. Which sentence has a more negative feeling?

1. I have **few** friends.
2. I have **a few** friends who live in London.

It was sentence number one right? When we use **few**, we're saying that the total number of something is not as many as we would like – that the number is small. Here, I'm telling you that I don't have many friends.

When we use **a few**, we're not talking about the total number, but a category of something. It has a similar meaning to 'some'. Here, I'm telling you that some of my friends live in London.

Just remember, we always use this with countable nouns only, so please be careful. See you next time!