

1. ['lɪtl] *n*1) **немногое, небольшое количество; самая малость**

we must keep what little we have - мы должны беречь то немногое, что у нас есть

he did what little he could - он сделал всё, что было в его (слабых) силах

the little I have is not worth giving - ту малость, которая у меня есть, просто не стоит дарить

the little of his work that I have seen is excellent - то немногое из его работы, что я видел, - великолепно

every little helps - небольшая помощь - уже помощь; любая малость пригодится

2) **эмоц.-усил.** почти ничего; мало что

I understood little of his speech - в его речи я мало что понял

to make little of smth. - а) мало что понять; плохо расслышать, не раз глядеть *u m. n.*; I can make little of your writing - никак не разберу, что вы тут написали; б) недооценивать, принижать значение чего-л.

◇ from little up - *амер.* с детства

the little - «маленькие люди»

in little - а) в небольшом масштабе; б) в миниатюре

little by little, by little and little - мало-помалу, постепенно, понемногу

little or nothing - почти ничего, очень мало, ничтожное количество

a little *см.* a little 3

to think little of - не придавать особого значения, быть невысокого мнения (*о ком-л., чём-л.*)

2. [lɪtl] *a* (*less, lesser; least*)1. 1) **маленький, небольшой (о размере)**

little house [garden, boat] - домик [садик, лодочка], небольшой дом [сад, -ая лодка]

the little ones - а) малыши, дети; б) детёныши

the little Joneses - дети Джоунзов

my little man! - мой мальчик! (*обращение*)

2) **небольшой (о количестве); слабый; плохой**

to have little hope - иметь мало надежды /слабую надежду/

to pay little attention to smth. - почти не обращать внимания на что-л.

he has little time - у него мало времени

he has very little knowledge of the subject - он очень плохо /слабо/ знает предмет

unfortunately he has little money - к сожалению, у него мало денег /он небогат/

he knows little Latin and less Greek - он плохо знает латынь, а ещё хуже греческий

he gained little advantage from the scheme - он мало что выиграл от этой затеи

3) **короткий, недлинный**

shall I go a little way with you? - проводить вас немного? [*ср. тж.* ◇]

life's little day - короткий /быстротечный/ день жизни

4) **невысокий, небольшого роста**

a little fat man - приземистый толстяк

5) **спец.** малый

little guts - *анат.* тонкие кишки

little end - *авт.* малая (*поршневая*) головка шатуна

little auk - *биол.* малая гагарка (*Plautus alle*)

2. 1) **незначительный, несущественный, неважный**

a little difficulty - незначительное/несущественное/ затруднение

little things - мелочи; пустяки

little things of life - житейские мелочи

don't worry about little things - не беспокойтесь по пустякам

2) **мелкий, некрупный**

little farmer - мелкий фермер

3) **малый, неглавный**

little war - малая война

Little League - *амер.* Малая лига (*бейсбольная лига для мальчиков и девочек 8-12 лет*)

3. **милый, славный (часто имеет ласкательное значение и передаётся уменьшительным суффиксом)**

isn't he a little devil! - вот дьяволёнок!

you little rascal! - эй ты, пострелёнок!

smb.'s little ways - маленькие смешные слабости, глупые (детские) привычки

poor little efforts to please - трогательное старание угодить /понравиться/

4. **мелкий, мелочный, ничтожный, ограниченный**

a little man with a little mind - ничтожный ограниченный человечиска

mean little comments - замечания типа мелочных придинок

5. **предназначенный для узкого круга; не массовый**

little magazine - малообъёмный журнал (*печатают произведения, не рассчитанные на массового читателя; выходит небольшим тиражом*)

little theatre - а) театр-студия б) камерный театр (*ставящий экспериментальные пьесы*); в) самодеятельный театр (*при колледже*)

◇ little woman - жена, жёнушка

little Mary - *сл.* желудок

The Little Corporal - «маленький капрал», Наполеон Бонапарт

Little Rhody - *амер. шутл.* штат Род-Айленд

to go but a (very) little way to ... быть недостаточным, не хватать [ср. тж. 1, 3]]

little stranger - новорождённый (в семье)

to expect a little stranger - ждать прибавления семейства

little bird - источник информации ≅ сорока на хвосте принесла

a little bird tells me you are getting married - где-то я слышала, что ты выходишь замуж

little grey cells - а) клетки серого вещества (мозга); б) мозги

use your little grey cells! - шевели мозгами!

little black book - *амер.* записная книжка с телефонами женщин; «адрес - календарь донжуана»

little boy's room - *эфф.* уборная, туалет

little ladies in tennis shoes - *амер. полит. жарг.* «старушки в мягкой обуви», активистки консервативного направления, крайние реакционерки

3. [lɪtl] *adv* (*less; least*)

1. 1) мало, почти нисколько

little more - ненамного больше; немногим больше

he is little more than an amateur - он недалеко ушёл от любителя он выступает /играет, пишет/ почти на любительском уровне

he left little more than an hour ago - он ушёл час с небольшим тому назад

little less than - не намного меньше; почти столько же /так же/

he is little less talented than his father - талантом он не намного уступает отцу, он почти так же талантлив как отец

I can say very little about this book - я могу очень немного сказать об этой книге

he is little known - его почти никто /мало кто/ знает

that is little short of madness! - это на грани безумия!

2) редко

I go there [see them] very little - я хожу туда [вижу их] очень редко

2. (в предложениях с инверсией) совсем не, вовсе не

when I first came to this country, I little thought that I should stay so long - когда я приехал в эту страну, я никак не думал, что проживу здесь так долго

they little expected /little did they expect/ such trouble - они никак не предполагали /им и в голову не приходило/, что возникнет такая неприятность

little he cares whether we live or die - ему всё равно /ему наплевать/, живы мы или нет

he little dreams that ... - ему и не снится, что ..., ему и невдомёк, что ...

◇ a little *см.* a little 1

little

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 8th Ed.

lit-tle [ˈlɪtl̩] *adjective, determiner, pronoun, adverb* *BrE* [ˈlɪtl̩] ^а

NAme [ˈlɪtl̩] ^а

adjective usually before noun The forms **littler** /ˈlɪtlə(r)/ and **littlest** /ˈlɪtlɪst/ are rare. It is more common to use **smaller** and **smallest**.

1. not big; small; smaller than others

- a little house
- a little group of tourists
- a little old lady
- the classic little black dress
- 'Which do you want?' 'I'll take the little one.'
- She gave a little laugh.
- (BrE) We should manage, with **a little bit** of luck.
- Here's **a little something** (= a small present) for your birthday.

2. used after an adjective to show affection or dislike, especially in a ↑patronizing way (= one that suggests that you think you are better than sb)

- The **poor little thing**! It's lost its mother.
- What a nasty little man!
- She's a good little worker.
- He'd become **quite the little** gentleman.

3. young

- a **little boy/girl**
- my **little brother/sister** (= younger brother/sister)
- I lived in America when I was little.

4. (of distance or time) short

- A **little while** later the phone rang.
- Shall we walk a little way?

5. not important; not serious

- I can't remember every little detail.
- You soon get used to the little difficulties.

more at great/tall oaks from little acorns grow **at** ↑oak, (it's) no/little/small wonder (that)... **at** ↑wonder _n.

Word Origin:

Old English *lyttel*, of Germanic origin; related to Dutch *luttel*, German dialect *lützel*.

Thesaurus:

little *adj.*

1. usually before noun (not usually used in the comparative or superlative)

- What a dear little baby!

small • • **tiny** • • **miniature** • • **compact** • • **minute** • • **microscopic** •

Opp: big, **Opp:** large

a little/small/tiny/miniature **house/town/room**

a little/small/tiny/minute/microscopic **detail**

a little/small/tiny **baby/child**

Little or small? **Small** is the most usual opposite of **big** or **large**. **Little** is often used to show how you feel about sb/sth, especially after other adjectives such as **ugly**, **nice** or **cute**.

2. usually before noun (especially spoken)

- What a fuss over one little mistake!

small • • **slight** • • **minimal** • • **marginal** • • **minor** • | usually disapproving **trivial** • • **petty** •

Opp: big, **Opp:** great

a little/small/slight/minimal/marginal **change/improvement**

a little/small/slight/trivial **error/mistake/problem**

a little/small/slight **defect/accident**

Example Bank:

- He was a nasty little man.
- He's still very little and doesn't understand yet.
- It was a lovely little village before the war.
- Poor little thing! It's broken its wing.
- The room was full of funny little animals.
- A little boy was standing on the doorstep.
- All those problems because of one little mistake!
- Here's a little something for your birthday.
- I can't remember every little detail.
- I give thanks for every little thing.
- I was a little bit afraid of him.
- It's just one of life's little mysteries.
- She wore a version of the classic little black dress.
- The system has some odd little quirks.
- They lived in a little house just down the valley.
- We had a little adventure yesterday.
- What a cute little baby!
- What a horrible little man!
- You wouldn't expect a sweet little old lady to react like that.
- You'll feel a little sting.
- You'll soon get used to these little difficulties.
- a little error/mistake/defect/problem/argument/accident/incident/adventure/mystery/quirk/secret

Idioms: ↑ **little bird told me** ▪ ↑ **little by little**

Derived Word ↑ **littleness**

determiner, pronoun

1. used with uncountable nouns to mean 'not much'

- There was little doubt in my mind.
- Students have **little or no** choice in the matter.
- I understood little of what he said.
- She said **little or nothing** (= hardly anything) about her experience.
- Tell him **as little as possible**.

2. a little used with uncountable nouns to mean 'a small amount', 'some'

- a little milk/sugar/tea
- If you have any spare milk, could you give me a little?
- I've only read a little of the book so far.
- (formal) It caused **not a little/no little** (= a lot of) confusion.
- After a little (= a short time) he got up and left.

Word Origin:

Old English *lyttel*, of Germanic origin; related to Dutch *luttel*, German dialect *lützel*.

adverb (less, least)

1. not much; only slightly

- He is little known as an artist.
- I slept very little last night.
- **Little did I know** that this spelled the end of my career.

2. a little (bit) to a small degree

- She seemed a little afraid of going inside.
- These shoes are a little (bit) too big for me.
- (informal) Everything has become **just that little bit** harder.

- (formal) She felt tired and **more than a little** worried.

Word Origin:

Old English *lyt̪el*, of Germanic origin; related to Dutch *luttel*, German dialect *lützel*.

British/American:

a bit / a little

In *BrE* it is common to use **a bit** to mean 'slightly' or 'to a small extent': ▪ These shoes are a bit tight. ◊▪ I'll be a bit later home tomorrow. ◊▪ Can you turn the volume up a bit?

It is more common in *NAmE* to say **a little**, or (informal) **a little bit**. You can also use these phrases in *BrE*: ▪ These shoes are a little bit too tight. ◊▪ I'll be a little later home tomorrow. ◊▪ Can you turn the volume up a little bit?

little

Longman DOCE 5th Ed. (En-En)

I. **little**¹ **S1 W1** /'lɪtl/ *BrE* " *AmE* " *adjective*

[Language: Old English; Origin: *lytel*]

1. **SIZE** [usually before noun] small in size:

- a little house
- a cake decorated with little flowers
- She was cutting the meat up into little bits.

little tiny/tiny little spoken (=extremely small)

- a little tiny puppy

little bitty American English spoken (=extremely small)

a little something informal (=a small present, or a small amount of food)

- I'd like to buy him a little something to thank him.

2. **SOMETHING YOU LIKE OR DISLIKE** [only before noun] used between an adjective and a noun to emphasize that you like or dislike something or someone, although they are not important, impressive etc:

- It could be a nice little business.
- a useful little gadget
- It was another of her silly little jokes.
- a boring little man

poor little thing (=used to show sympathy)

- The poor little thing had hurt its wing.

3. **a little bit**

a) a small amount of something

a little bit of

- With a little bit of luck we should finish by five o'clock.
- I'm going to give you a little bit of advice.
- Let me tell you a little bit about myself.

b) slightly or to a small degree:

- I was a little bit disappointed.

4. **TIME/DISTANCE** [only before noun] short in time or distance:

- You could have a little sleep in the car.
- We walked a little way along this path.
- He arrived a little while ago.

5. **YOUNG** little children are young:

- We didn't have toys like this when I was little.

little boy/girl

- two little boys playing in the street

sb's little boy/girl (=someone's son or daughter who is still a child)

- Mum, I'm 17 – I'm not your little girl any longer.

sb's little brother/sister (=a younger brother or sister who is still a child)

- Her little brother and sister were fighting again.

6. **SLIGHT** [only before noun] done in a way that is not very noticeable:

- a little smile
- Nicolo gave a little nod of his head.

7. **UNIMPORTANT** [only before noun]

a) not important:

- She gets very angry over little things.
- There isn't time to discuss every little detail.

b) not important – used when you really think that something is important:

- There's just that little matter of the £5,000 you owe me.

8. **(just) that little bit better/easier etc** better, easier etc by a small amount that will have an important effect:

- Working fewer hours will make life just that little bit easier for me.

9. **the little woman old-fashioned** someone's wife – often used humorously but now considered offensive by many women

⇒ **a little bird told me** at ↑bird(4)

• • •

GRAMMAR

You can say **smaller** or **smallest**, but 'littler' and 'littlest' are not often used:

▪ Her feet are even smaller (NOT littler/more little) than mine.

You can use words like 'quite', 'very', and 'too' in front of **small**, but do not use them with **little**:

▪ a very small car (NOT a very little car)

II. **little**² **S1 W1 BrE** ^{AmE} *determiner, pronoun*

1. only a small amount or hardly any of something:

- There's little doubt in my mind that he's guilty.
- I paid little attention to what the others were saying.
- Little is known about the causes of the problem.
- Changes in the law have done little to improve the situation.

little of

- Little of their wealth now remains.
- There's very little money left.
- Many of the students speak little or no English.
- He knew little or nothing (=almost nothing) about fixing cars.
- My lawyer advised me to say as little as possible.
- He did precious little (=very little) to help.
- The laboratory tests are of little real value.

2. **a little** a small amount:

- Fortunately I had a little time to spare.
- Susan speaks a little French.
- A little over half the class can swim.
- He walked on a little (=a short distance) and then turned back.

a little more/less

- Would you like a little more milk in your coffee?

a little of

- The city is regaining a little of its former splendour.

3. **as little as £5/3 months/10 feet etc** used to emphasize how surprisingly small an amount is:

- Prices for his paintings start from as little as £100.
- The weather can change completely in as little as half an hour.

4. **what little** (also **the little (that)**) used to emphasize how small an amount there is, how small an amount is possible etc:

- We did what little we could to help.
- I handed over what little money I had left.

5. **a little (of something) goes a long way** *spoken* used to say that only a small amount of something is needed or has a great effect:

- A little kindness goes a long way.

• • •

GRAMMAR

A little and **little** are used before uncountable nouns.

A little means 'some, but not a lot':

▪ We still have a little time left.

In spoken British English, it is more usual to say **a bit of**:

▪ I've got a bit of money left.

Little on its own (without **a**) means 'not much'. It emphasizes how small the amount is. It is mainly used in writing or formal speech:

▪ There is now little hope of success.

In conversation or informal writing, it is more usual to say **not much**:

▪ There was not much milk left.

III. **little**³ **S1 W1 BrE** ^{AmE} *adverb*

1. **a little** slightly or to a small degree **SYN a bit**:

- She trembled a little as she spoke.
- He was a little surprised at her request.

a little more/better/further etc

- We'll have to wait a little longer to see what happens.

GRAMMAR

When you use **a little** with an adjective, it should come before the adjective, not after it:

▪ I was a little worried about her (NOT I was worried a little ...).

▶ You cannot use **a little** with an adjective before a noun. Use **rather** or **slightly**:

▪ It was a rather strange situation (NOT a little strange situation).

2. not much or only slightly:

- The town has changed little over the years.
- The situation has improved very little.

little known/understood etc (=not known about by many people)

- a little known corner of the world

little more/better etc (than something)

- His voice was little more than a whisper.

3. **little did somebody know/realize /think etc** used to say that someone did not know or think that something would happen or was true:

- Little did I know that the course of my life was about to change.

4. **little by little** gradually:

Little by little he became accepted by the family.

5. **more than a little/not a little** *literary* extremely:

"Graham was more than a little frightened by what he had seen."

little

Freakuency Pack

12500 **351**^{MCW}

15000 **129**^{COCA}

RANGE: **1k** LITTLE ³⁰¹⁵⁷⁵

little ³⁰¹¹⁵⁵

littler ⁹⁹

littlest ³²¹

COCA 500k Unlemmatized

61004 **232**¹⁵⁶²⁸¹ *jj*

34396 **632**⁶¹¹⁸⁷ *rr22*

33176 **841**⁴⁷⁴²¹ *da1*

16529 **1996**²¹⁵⁴¹ *rr*

7560 **4064**⁹⁸⁹⁷ *rr32*

2808 **7366**⁴⁷²⁹ *np1*

85 **81490**⁸⁷ *nn1*

8 **293976**⁸ *nnu*

4 **450488**⁴ *pphis1*