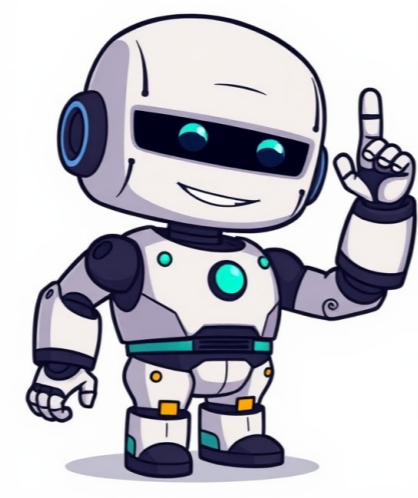


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paraphrased text here It's raining a lot in Oregon, which is why it's often used as an example of a place with excessive precipitation. However, saying "it rains" in this context implies that it's a general tendency or pattern, rather than specifying the amount of rain. The phrase "it rains" can be found in sentences like "I don't want to go to Oregon; it rains there all the time." This usage doesn't necessarily convey an abundance of rain; it could simply mean occasional light showers. To emphasize the amount of rain, using the present progressive tense is a better choice. For example, "we're having a lot of rain for this time of year" accurately conveys the idea that the current rain is unusual or excessive compared to what's expected. Using "it rains" without any indication of quantity can be misleading, as it could refer to either frequent light showers or infrequent heavy downpours. The phrase "It rains in the Greenwhite Desert only once every twenty years, and then only for thirty seconds" illustrates this ambiguity well. In contrast, expressing the amount of rain using phrases like "we're having a lot of rain lately" or "there's been a lot of rain this month" provides more clarity. When referring to past precipitation, it's generally idiomatic to use the present perfect tense instead of the simple past. For instance, saying "it has rained a lot this month" is more common than "it rained a lot this month." This distinction helps avoid confusion between the general tendency and specific instances. In your examples, "We had rain last night" is idiomatic, as it implies that it rained at your location. On the other hand, saying "There was rain last night" is less common and might sound slightly unnatural. Treating "rain" as a plural noun is possible in certain contexts, such as when referring to multiple instances of precipitation or describing different types of rain. For example, "We had two heavy rains last month," but it's generally more accurate to use the singular form for general references to precipitation or specific instances. In your sentence "They had little rain last year," using the article "a" before "little" is optional and depends on context. If you mean that they received less than usual, the article would be appropriate, as in "The crops failed because they had little rain last year." It's also possible to say "it rained a little last night" when referring to a single rainfall with minimal water content. We're getting a lot of precipitation currently. You asked if it's an idiomatic expression - yes, it is! Seattle's climate can be described as rainy. The previous day was overcast, and this month has been even rainier than November usually is in July. Kaaui's Mt. Wai'ale'ale might just hold the record for being the rainiest spot on earth. I'd like to acknowledge Basil Ganglia's input. One more thing - can you say "it rained a bit last night" or "we're getting a lot of rain right now"? They are both grammatically correct and idiomatic. You asked about the phrase "rain," and I think it's okay to use it in these ways: 1) It drizzled a little last evening, but there was more of it overnight. 2) We've been experiencing substantial rainfall throughout the day. There are other colloquial expressions for these events as well: When it rains = a) we had a light shower (small amount of rain) this morning b) we had multiple showers during the night When it's raining heavily = a) we're having heavy precipitation at the moment b) it is pouring down/it's raining cats and dogs right now.

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