



# Articles

The – A – An – Ø

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# Study these sentences:

- ▶ There is **a** man in **the** street. **The** man is talking to **a** policeman.



- ▶ I have ~~Ø~~ bread and **a** cup of milk for ~~Ø~~ breakfast.




Articles are **two** Types:

- I. Indefinite Articles: **A – An**
- II. Definite Article : **THE**



# I. Indefinite Articles: **A – An**



The articles AN - A are used before **singular**, countable nouns in their general sense

### Examples:

- ▶ I will buy **a** car in the future
- ▶ I ate **an** apple at lunch

## ► When to use A?

When the first **SOUND** in the noun is:

a consonant → **A**

A **s**nake , A **t**iger , A **T**ree

## ► When to use AN?

When the first **SOUND** in the noun is:

A vowel → **AN**

An **A**pple , An **I**sland, An **a**stronaut



REMEMBER!

It is the **SOUND** and NOT the **Letter**

**An** X-Ray

**AN** Hour

**A** horse

## II. Zero Article: $\emptyset$



**USE 1:** with **countable plural** used in their general sense.

- ▶ Ahmed and Ali are Ø students.
- ▶ I like Ø apples.



**USE 2:** The zero article is used with **uncountable** nouns:

- ▶ He is drinking Ø **water**.
- ▶ she thinks Ø **Love** is everywhere.



# Uncountable nouns:

Types	Examples:
Ideas and experiences	advice, information, progress, luck, fun, work, etc.
Solid and Granular Substances	skin, wood, metal, cheese, sand, rice, etc.
Weather words	weather, thunder, lightning, rain, snow, etc.
Grouped ideas or collections of things	furniture, equipment, luggage, food, money, news, vocabulary, fruit, etc.
Abstract nouns	education, experience, hatred, help, knowledge, life, love, sleep, time, understanding, etc.
Liquids and gases	water, milk, air, coffee, smoke, mist, etc.
Energy	heat, cold, light, sunshine, radiation, etc.
School Subjects	English, economics, math, science, etc.
Name of a diseases	Cancer, flu, Malaria, etc. <b>NOT:</b> heart attack, ache, and tumor.
Sports and games	basketball, football, tennis, etc.



### USE 3: Name of some **individual geographical features**:

Continents, countries, cities, villages, towns,  
Street, roads, single mountains, lakes, and islands.

### USE 4: with **days, months, seasons, and holidays**:

*on Monday - in March - in summer - at Christmas*

### USE 5: with certain **places** and **institutions**:

- ▶ From *school/university/ college / class*
- ▶ to/ in/ into/ out of *prison/ hospital/ bed*
- ▶ to/ at/ from *work...*

### USE 6: with **meals**:

Breakfast, lunch, dinner.

### USE 7: with **prepositional phrases**:

by car/ bus/ bicycle/ plane/ train/ boat /  
on foot

**NOTICE:** But if there is a word or phrase that modifies the noun, an article is used:

**The** most delicious dinner.

**The** summer I graduate from high school.

**Practice:** Choose A, AN or Ø for each word.

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ Honey

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ table

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ Advice

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ health

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ Computer

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ Salt

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ Tea

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ Information

▶ \_\_\_\_\_ House

# I. Indefinite Articles: A – An

► They are used before singular, countable nouns in their general sense:

► When the first **SOUND** in the noun is:

a consonant → A

A snake , A tiger , A Tree

A vowel → AN

An Apple , An Island, An astronaut

► It is the **SOUND** and NOT the **Letter**

An X-Ray

AN Hour

A horse



## II. Zero Article: Ø

- ▶ **USE 1:** with **countable plural** used in their general sense: Students – apples ...
- ▶ **USE 2:** The zero article is used with **uncountable** nouns: water – love – bread ....
- ▶ **USE 3:** **Name of some individual geographical features:**

Continents, countries, cities, villages, towns, Street, roads, single mountains, lakes, and islands.

- ▶ **USE 4:** with **days, months, seasons, and holidays**
- ▶ **USE 5:** with **certain places and institutions:** to school – from prison – to University....
- ▶ **USE 6:** with **meals**
- ▶ **USE 7:** with **prepositional phrases:**

**by** car/ bus/ bicycle/ plane/ train/ boat - **on** foot

**NOTICE:** But if there is a word or phrase that modifies the noun, an article is used:

**The** most delicious dinner.



### III. Definite Article : **THE**

USE 1: when the other person knows what we are referring to.

Example:

Safae: Who is **the** girl you were talking with?

Nawal: Her name is Sally.  
she is **the** new teacher.



## USE 2: Unique things/people:

Example: **The earth** goes round **the sun**.

The Sun

The internet

The moon

The king (It means there is just one king in the kingdom)



## USE 3: Before SUPERLATIVES:

Examples:

- ▶ The tallest man alive.
- ▶ The worst movie.
- ▶ The best city in the world.



USE 4: to talk about previously mentioned things

Example:

► There is a cat in your room. The cat is white.





# USE 5: when talking about the following **geographical** features and places:

a) Names of rivers, seas, oceans and canals:

**The** river Volga - **the** Caspian Sea.



b) Names of mountain ranges, island groups, deserts:  
They went skiing in **the** Swiss Alps.

c) Countries with plural names (kingdom, states or republic):

**the** United **States** - **the** **Republic** of China – **The** Netherlands...

d) Famous buildings, works of art, museums, or monuments:

**The** Science Museum, **The** Mona Lisa, ...

e) Names of hotels, restaurants, cinemas and theaters, :

**The** Hilton Hotels, ....



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# USE 6: when talking about the following **Groups:**

## f) Names of families:

**The Simpsons, the Obamas The Bni Znasen...**



## g) Species of animals:

**The domestic cat – The African lion...**

## i) Names of National Groups and Organizations:

He used to work for **the Red Cross**

## h) Adjectives that refer to a group of people:

**The French** enjoy cheese.

She has given a lot of money to **the poor**.



## USE 7: when talking about the following:

### a) Names of inventions

When was **the** telephone invented?



### Decades and Ordinal Numbers:

**The** 19<sup>th</sup> century, **the** 1750's, **the** seventies...

**The** First/ Second/ third...

### b) Names of Newspapers:

**The** New York Times - **The** L'Opinion

### III. Definite Article : **THE**

- ▶ **USE 1**: when the other person knows what we are referring to.
- ▶ **USE 2**: **Unique** things/people: the sun – the king ...
- ▶ **USE 3**: Before **SUPERLATIVES**: The best – the worst ...
- ▶ **USE 4**: to talk about previously mentioned things.
- ▶ **USE 5**: when talking a certain **geographical features and places**:  
**Oceans – Mountain ranges - Countries with plural names – hotels...**
- ▶ **USE 6**: when talking about certain **Groups**:  
Families – Organizations - Species of animals .....
- ▶ **Other Uses: inventions, Newspapers, Decades**:  
the phone - The L'opinion - the 17<sup>th</sup> century - The first...

Time for Practice!





## Exercise 1: Fill the blanks with “A”, “an”, “the”, or “Ø” for zero article.

- ▶ 1) I like \_\_\_\_\_ blue T-shirt over there better than the red one.
- ▶ 2) Their car does 150 miles \_\_\_\_\_ hour.
- ▶ 3) Do you still live in \_\_\_\_\_ Bristol?
- ▶ 4) What do you usually have for \_\_\_\_\_ lunch?
- ▶ 5) Ben has \_\_\_\_\_ terrible headache.
- ▶ 6) My wife likes \_\_\_\_\_ flowers very much.

**Exercise 2: Choose A, AN, THE or (/) for "no article" for each blank below:**

I apologize for not emailing you earlier to tell you about ..... trip of last week, but I've had ..... many things to do since we got back. We had ..... fantastic time in ..... South Africa. Although this is ..... first time I've ever traveled to ..... foreign country, I feel confident saying that it's one of ..... most beautiful places on ..... planet.

# References:

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