

ARTICLES

Use of a/an, and the

Singular, countable nouns always have an article – a/an or the (or another determiner – my, your, this, that, etc.).



I saw a good film yesterday.

We use a/an – the indefinite article – when we talk about something for the first time, or something that is part of a group or type.



Would you like a cup of coffee?

We use a when the word that follows it begins with a consonant sound. We use an when it's followed by a vowel sound. This makes pronunciation easier.

We will be there in an hour.

She has an orange shirt.

He has a university degree.

I'm wearing a watch.

We use the – the definite article – when the listener already knows which thing we are talking about because it was mentioned before or because there's only one of it.

I am going to the shop.



She is taking the dog out for a walk.



They live under the bridge.



The Moon is our satellite.



When we talk about things in general, we normally use a plural or uncountable noun with no article.

Water boils at 100°C.

Cats catch mice.



When we talk about a particular group of things, we use the.

We went to the zoo and saw the elephants.

These are the particular elephants in that zoo – not elephants in general.



Exercise 1 (a/an/the)

- There is __ apple in my bag.
- She owns __ bookstore near my house.
- There is __ supermarket in my neighbourhood.
- They're having __ meeting here today.
- This is ___ question that everybody asks.
- Is there ___ place where I can sleep?
- This is ___ most important thing ever!
- This is ___ only place we go on weekends.
- We work with ___ government.
- ___ butcher is closing soon!