

The indefinite article a/an

- We use **a/an**:
with singular countable nouns when we talk about them in general.

I want to buy an iPod. (any iPod)

with the verbs **to be** and **have** (got).

Jillian has (got) a dog. It's a German Shepherd.

before **Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms** when we refer to an unknown person.

A Mr Davis left a message for you this morning.

(a person that we don't know)

to show:

a) price in relation to weight. *(two euros a kilo)*

b) distance in relation to speed. *(100 km an hour)*

c) frequency. *(twice a month)*

We do not use **a/an**:

- with uncountable nouns or plural countable nouns.

We use **some** instead of **a/an**.

We need some paper plates and some juice for the party.

He bought her some sweets.

- before an adjective if it is not followed by a noun.

This book is funny. BUT This is a funny book.

One/Ones

We use:

- **one** in the singular and **ones** in the plural to avoid repeating the noun when it is clear what we mean.

My dog is the one with the pointed ears. I don't wear baggy trousers. I wear tight ones.

- **a/an** with **one** when there is an adjective before **one**.

I want to buy a book. I want a paperback one. BUT I want to buy a computer. I want one with a flat screen monitor.

- **one/ones** with **this/that**. *I don't like this pair of shorts, but I like that one.*

- **which one(s)** in questions. *I like the purple T-shirt. Which one do you like?*

1 Fill in a/an or one(s).

- The maximum speed limit on motorways in Britain is 112 km **an** hour.
- Mary slept at her friend's house night last week.
- If you know how to use computer, I can give you interesting game to play.
- There's Ms Davis in the flat next door. I'd like to have salad with my pizza.
- Yesterday we went to open-air restaurant to have lunch.
- My brother is the who is wearing boots. These biscuits are much tastier than the I usually buy.
- Argentina was of the first teams to play in the World Cup.

2 Fill in a/an or one(s).

- She bought him **a** very expensive watch as a gift for his birthday.
- Jason is of the best basketball players in school.
- time we went hiking in forest and camped beside lovely river.
- Simone has got excellent piano teacher. We waited half hour for bus.
- Finally came, but it was full of people. She has two daughters. is a teacher and the other a reporter.
- If you are on diet, you'll have to stop eating junk food.
- I'd like you to make copy for Mr Jenkins and a few extra for everyone else in the office.

14 Articles

The definite article *the*

We use *the*:

- with nouns when talking about something specific.
Mary has got a pen and pencil.
The pen is blue and the pencil is black.
- with nouns that are unique (*the sun, the Equator*, etc).
- with names of newspapers (*the City Press*), cinemas (*the Odeon*), theatres (*the National Theatre*), hotels (*the Carlton*), museums/art galleries (*the Tate Museum*), ships (*the Mayflower*), organisations (*the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*).
- with the names of rivers (*the Nile*), groups of islands (*the Canary Islands*), mountain ranges (*the Rocky Mountains*), deserts (*the White Desert*), oceans (*the Pacific Ocean*), canals (*the Panama Canal*), countries when they include words such as *State, Kingdom, Republic* (*the United States of America*), names or nouns with *of* (*the Houses of Parliament*), in geographical terms such as *the Antarctic/Arctic/ Equator, the south of France, the North/East/South/West*.
- with the names of musical instruments and dances (*the drums, the tango*).
- with the names of families (*the Smiths*) and nationalities ending in *-sh, -ch* or *-ese* (*the Danish*). Other nationalities can be used with or without *the* (*the Germans/Germans*).
- with titles (*the Queen, the President*) BUT not with titles including a proper name (*Queen Anna Maria*).
- with adjectives/adverbs in the superlative form (*the best story I have ever read*) BUT when *most* is followed by a noun, it doesn't take *the*.
Most children like watching cartoons.
- with the words *day, morning, afternoon, evening* and *night*.
It was early in the morning when we left for the airport.
BUT *at night, at noon, at midnight, by day/night*
- with historical periods/events (*the Middle Ages, the Gulf War*). BUT *World War II*
- with the words *only, last* and *first* (used as adjectives). *She was the last one to leave the office.*
- with the words *beach, cinema, city, coast, country(side), ground, jungle, library, sea(side), shop, station, theatre, village, weather, world*.
Shall we go to the theatre tonight?

Remember!

- We usually don't use *the* with the word *television*.
I don't have much time to watch television. BUT *I turned off the television and went to bed.* (the television set)
- *The* is optional with seasons. *I love (the) spring when all the flowers come out.*
- When we refer to a group of people, animals or things we use:
 - a) *a/an* or *the* with singular countable nouns. *An/The eagle is a beautiful creature.*
 - b) plural countable nouns without *a/an* or *the*. *Eagles are beautiful creatures.*
(NOT: *The eagles are ...*)

We do not use *the*:

- with uncountable and plural nouns when talking about something in general.
Pandas live in central China. Many people go on holiday in August.
- with proper nouns. *Geoffrey is a scientist.*
- with the names of sports, games, activities, days, months, celebrations, colours, drinks and meals.
We had lunch with the Jones on Saturday.
- with languages, unless they are followed by the word *language*.
Michelle speaks Chinese and Russian fluently.
BUT *The Arabic language is difficult to learn.*
- with the names of countries which don't include the word *State, Kingdom* or *Republic*.
(*Italy, Poland, Holland*)
BUT *the Netherlands, the Vatican* (exceptions)
- with the names of streets
(*Main Road, Park Avenue*) BUT *the M4, the A12, squares (Madison Square Gardens), bridges (Brooklyn Bridge) BUT the Golden Gate Bridge, parks (Central Park), railway stations (Richmond, Tower Hill), mountains (Mount Everest), individual islands (Pine Island), lakes (Lake Dobie) and continents (Africa)*
- with possessive adjectives or the possessive case
That is my mug.
- with the names of restaurants, shops, banks, hotels, etc which are named after the people who started them (*Selfridges, Luigi's Restaurant*).
- with the words *bed, hospital, college, court, prison, school, university* when we refer to the purpose for which they exist.
My brother has been in hospital for two weeks.
BUT *We went to the hospital to keep John company.*
- with the word *work* (= place of work).
I went to work at 9 o'clock every morning.
- with the words *home, mother, father*, etc when we talk about our own home/parents. *Father isn't at home.*
- with *by* + means of transport (*bus/ferry/train/car etc*)
We go to the islands by ferry.
- with the names of illnesses. *He's got pneumonia.*
BUT *flu/the flu, measles/the measles, mumps/the mumps*