

Article

What is an article?

Basically, **articles** are either *definite* or *indefinite*. They combine to a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun.

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The definite article is the. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The indefinite article is a / an. |

The indefinite article *a* or *an*:

The article **a / an** is used when we don't specify the things or people we are talking about:

- I met **a** friend.
- I work in **a** factory in New York.
- I borrowed **a** pencil from **a** passenger sitting next to me.

The indefinite article **a** is used before a consonant sound:

- **a** dog
- **a** pilot
- **a** teacher
- **a** university

NOTE:

Although 'university' starts with the vowel 'u', it is not pronounced as such. It is pronounced as a consonant sound /ju:ni.vɜ:si.ti/

The indefinite article **an** is used before a vowel sound:

- **an** engineer
- **an** elephant
- **an** athlete

Article

The definite article *the*:

It's used when the speaker talks about a specific object that both the person speaking and the listener know.

- **The** car over there is fast.
- **The** president of the United States is giving a speech tonight.

When we speak of something or someone for the first time, we use **a** or **an**. The next time we repeat that object, we use the definite article **the**.

- I live in **a** house. **The** house is quite old and has four bedrooms.
- I ate in **a** Chinese restaurant. **The** restaurant was very good.

No article:

1. Do not use an article with countries, states, counties or provinces, lakes and mountains except when the country is a collection of states such as "**The** United States".

- He lives in **Washington** near **Mount Rainier**.
- They live in **Northern British Columbia**.
- They climbed **Mount Everest**.

2. We do not normally use an article with plurals and uncountable nouns to talk about things in general.:

- He writes books.
- She likes sweets.
- Do you like jazz music?
- She ate bread with butter in the morning.