

Articles

An article is a word that signals the coming of a noun. A, An and The are articles. A and An are indefinite articles, because they:

- do not particularize a noun but generalize it.
- are used before any singular, countable noun or a class of nouns.

'The' is a definite article because it particularizes a noun.

Articles are not a distinctive part of speech but merely adjectives. "A, An" are the abbreviated form of the adjective 'one', and "the" an abbreviated form of 'this', 'that', 'these', 'those'.

'A' is used before nouns beginning with a consonant, e.g.:

A girl came out of the house. (any girl)

May I have a cup of coffee? (any cup having coffee)

A man loves his family. (everyman)

'An' is used for any person, place or thing beginning with the sound of a vowel, e.g.

An empty vessel makes much noise. (All empty vessels)

'The' is used when referring to a noun which has already been mentioned before, e.g. Her mother gave her a doll. The doll had a blue dress.

Exceptions:

A, An: Words like European, University, United team. Though these words begin with a vowel, they have the sound of 'y', so 'A' is used.

Words like heir, hour and honourable begin with a consonant but have the vowel sound and a mute 'h', so 'An' is used.

Use of "The"

- Used as singular countable noun only if it has been mentioned before, e.g., A man entered the room. The man was trembling with fear.
- Used with a noun representing a class, e.g., The tiger is dangerous.
- If 'the' is added to an adjective it represents a class, e.g., The rich do not care.
- If 'the' is added to an adjective it represents a quality, e.g., The good within him, was defeated by the evil in him.
- 'The' is used to show it is the best of its kind when used with a noun, e.g., This is the place to come for an outing.
- 'The' is used before a noun to show a person's title, rank, profession, e.g., The Principal, the doctor, the President.

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- Names of newspapers take 'the' with them, e.g., "The Times of India".
- 'The' is used with common singular nouns showing musical instruments, e.g., He plays the tabla and the guitar.
- 'The' is used before a noun to show unit of measurement, e.g., Milk is bought by the litre.
- 'The' is used before Geographical Proper nouns, e.g., The Himalayas, etc.

Use of "A" and "An"

- Used to show one, any or a certain thing or person, e.g., There is a book on the bed.
- Used to show a kind, a class or a species, e.g., A dog is an intelligent animal.
- Used to show certain expressions using numbers, e.g., There are a dozen reasons I can give for it.
- Used to show the rate in certain expressions, e.g., Bananas are `18/- a dozen.
- Used to show profession, rank, caste, community, religion, e.g., a doctor, a Colonel, a Parsi, an Indian, an M.P.
- Before a verb that is used as a noun, e.g., She is going for a walk.
- 'A', 'An' are never used before uncountable nouns, e.g., "a water"
- A single countable indefinite noun always has 'a, or 'an', e.g., This is a bed not this is bed.
- Abstract nouns use 'a' or 'an' when showing quality, e.g., A good- mannered girl.
- We use a Proper noun as a Common noun to mean 'one like', e.g., Just because he did well in Physics he thinks he is an Einstein.

Omission of the Articles

Articles can be omitted in the following conditions:

(i) Before Proper nouns

For example, Mumbai is a big city.

However, when the Article is used before a Proper noun it becomes a Common noun.

For example, Mumbai is the London of the East.

(ii) Before Common nouns used in the widest sense

For example, Man is mortal.

(iii) Before Abstract nouns used in a general sense

For example, Honesty is the best policy.

However, when an Abstract noun is qualified by an adjective or an adjectival phrase it can take 'the'

For example, The bravery of the Rani of Jhansi is well known.

iv. Before Material nouns

For example, Gold is a precious metal.

v. Before titles coming before the Proper noun

For example, Professor Bhattacharya, King George IV

vi. Before names of streets and roads

For example, Connaught Place is a shopper's paradise.

Chandni Chowk is the favourite stop for food lovers.

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vii. Before names of games

For example, She plays badminton.

viii. Before names of language

For example, English is spoken in England.

ix. Before names of meals

For example, Have you had dinner yet?

x. In certain expressions, like all day, all night.

For example, My husband works hard all day.

Task 1 Do as Directed

Activity : Fill in the blanks with the correct article.

1. Shabnam asked (a, an, the) waiter if she could have more water.
2. I live in (a, an, the) state of Rajasthan.
3. I would love to tell you (a, an, the) truth.
4. Can you tell me (a, an, the) joke?
5. I saw (a, an, the) snake in my backyard.
6. We will go to (a, an, the) market tomorrow.
7. We saw (a, an, the) great movie.
8. I saw (a, an, the) chimpanzee at the zoo.
9. I am going to (a, an, the) movie after school.
10. Will you watch (a, an, the) movie with me?

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Task 2: Do as Directed

Activity : Fill in the blanks with the correct article.

1. Can you take me to (a, an, the) doctor?
2. Mohan saw (a, an, the) art piece that really inspired him.

3. We will go to (a, an, the) Pacific Mall today.
4. Will you watch (a, an, the) play with me?
5. I saw (a, an, the) elephant at the zoo.
6. I had (a, an, the) excellent sleep last night.
7. Did you consider (a, an, the) plan of action?
8. What is (a, an, the) plan for today?
9. I have to pronounce (a, an, the) winner of the game.
10. We took (a, an, the) taxi to the airport.

Task 3: Do as Directed

Activity : Circle the article or articles in each sentence below:

1. Did the dog disappear overnight?
2. That was a terrible mistake!
3. I had an application that was turned on one time.
4. Did the medicine work properly?
5. The man prevented the crowd from leaving.
6. I caught a fish in the lake.
7. The Principal gave a speech to the faculty.
8. What is the title of the novel?
9. I had a garage sale on my front lawn.
10. He has the courage to be successful.

Task 4 Do as Directed

Activity : Filling the blanks with A, AN or THE, or nothing at all.

1. _____ word to _____ wise is _____ sufficient.
2. _____ most of _____ stories people tell about _____ Red Indians are not true.
3. I am wearing _____ ring today. It is made of _____ gold.
4. _____ noodles we had for dinner last night were excellent.
5. _____ jewellery that bride is wearing is beautiful.
6. Everyone has problems in _____ life.
7. _____ people wear jewellery to look more attractive.
8. I don't know much about _____ life of Mahatma Gandhi.
9. Yes, my name is _____ Mohita, but I'm not _____ Mohita you're looking for.
10. My grandfather had _____ long life.

Task 5 :Do as Directed

Activity: In each of the sentences given below filling the article that completes it the best.

1. I saw _____ dolphin at the zoo. (a, an, the)
2. I go to _____ public school. (a, an, the)
3. I live in _____ state of Gujarat. (a, an, the)
4. We will go to _____ museum tomorrow.(a, an, the)
5. Can you tell me _____ story? (a, an, the)
6. Can you take me to _____ doctor? (a, an, the)
7. I saw _____ dog in my backyard. (a, an, the)
8. We will go to _____ market today. (a, an, the)
9. I would love to tell you _____ story. (a, an, the)
10. I am going to _____ play after school event. (a, an, the)

Task 6: Do as Directed

Activity: In each of the sentences given below filling the article that completes it the best.

1. I saw _____ elephant at the fair. (a, an, the)
2. We saw _____ exciting game of tennis. (a, an, the)
3. Will you watch _____ movie with me? (a, an, the)
4. I saw _____ dog in my backyard. (a, an, the)
5. Please take _____ seat in the back of the classroom. (a, an, the)
6. I saw _____ octopus at the aquarium. (a, an, the)
7. She saw _____ enormous fish in the lake. (a, an, the)
8. What is _____ novel that you would recommend? (a, an, the)
9. Will you watch _____ match on Saturday? (a, an, the)
10. I want _____ red apple. (a, an, the)

Task 7: Do as Directed

Activity : Circle the correct article (a or an) to complete each sentence.

1. Can you tell (a/an) interesting story?
2. I live in (a/an) big city.
3. I live in (a/an) small house.
4. We saw (a/an) awful accident.
5. I ran (a/an) marathon last year.
6. I saw (a/an) ox in the park.
7. Can you tell me (a/an) joke?
8. What is (a/an) bird that you like?
9. I have (a/an) problem.
10. I want (a/an) apple.

Task 7 :Do as Directed

Activity: In each of the sentences given below fill in the article that completes it the best. You may omit if no article is needed.

1. Have you ever met _____ Mr. Jain? He runs a café which caters to _____ very wealthy.
2. Beena loves _____ French; it's one of her favourite languages.
3. According to news reports, _____ British and _____ Dutch supported the treaty.
4. Mr. Mehta is _____ elderly and _____ poor, so an NGO provides him with financial assistance.
5. We donated our wealth to a charity which provides assistance to _____ elderly and _____ poor.
6. Did you know that _____ Australians speak _____ German?
7. Have you ever heard of _____ Manali? It is a famous hill station in India.
8. The school teaches _____ blind people to read.
9. Have you ever met _____ Gupta's? They are both _____ very wealthy.
10. Louis Braille created a writing system to allow _____ blind to read.

