

## English Articles-A, An, The

An article is a determiner that is used before a noun.

‘A’ and ‘an’ are articles that are used before a singular countable noun.

They do not define the place or person mentioned.

For example:

1. I read *a book*. (Could refer to any book)
2. Please pass me *a spoon*. (any spoon)

‘The’ is a definite article which specifies the person or thing.

It can be used with both singular and plural noun as well as with uncountable nouns.

For example:

1. I read *the book* you gave me. (Refers to a specific book)
2. Please pass me *the spoon* we bought yesterday. (not any spoon but the one bought yesterday)

There are certain situations when a noun takes no article. We will discuss that later. Today we will focus on where to use 'a' and 'an'.

The article 'a' is used before a singular countable noun which begins with a consonant or a consonant sound.

1. I bought *a fan*.
2. Pass me *a plate*.
3. He owns *a cow* and *a buffalo*.
4. She is playing with *a bat* and *a ball*.

Note how in the following sentences although the word begins with a vowel it is pronounced with a consonant sound and hence is preceded by 'a' not 'an'.

Is that a painting of *a unicorn*?

Similarly

*A University* (university starts with y sound)

*A one track* mind (one starts with w sound)

The article 'an' is used before a singular countable noun which begins with a vowel or a vowel sound.

1. *An apple* a day keeps the doctor away.
2. He is eating *an orange*.
3. She is carrying *an umbrella*.
4. My sister is preparing for *an interview*.

Note how in the following sentences although the word begins with a consonant it is pronounced with a vowel sound and hence is preceded by 'an' not 'a'.

It is *an honour* to work with you. ('h' is silent)

We will finish the work in *an hour*.

Similarly it is "*an honest man*"

Fill in the blanks with 'a' or 'an'.

1. There is -----car in the garage.
2. The children saw-----ostrich for the first time.
3. Her parents bought her-----cycle for her birthday.
4. She bought-----ugly looking horse.
5. The MLA is-----honest man.
6. It was-----unbelievable day in the office today.
7. It was-----honour to be called as a chief guest in my school.
8. I have to buy-----oven
9. Do you want-----apple or-----orange in your tiffin?
10. Do you want to buy-----car or-----scooter?

