



What Is a Determiner? – Meaning and Definition

A determiner is a word that is used to modify or introduce the noun in a sentence. It mostly acts like an adjective in that it refers to the noun. Determiners include [articles](#), adjectives of quantity, [demonstrative adjectives](#), [possessive adjectives](#), etc. A determiner need not always be in the beginning of a sentence; it can be used with nouns placed anywhere in the sentence.

A determiner, according to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary, is defined as "a word such as the, some, my, etc. that comes before a [noun](#) to show how the noun is being used", and according to the Cambridge Dictionary, a determiner is "a word that is used before a noun to show which particular example of the noun you are referring to". The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a determiner as "a word (such as an article, possessive, demonstrative, or quantifier) that makes specific the denotation of a [noun phrase](#)", and the Collins Dictionary defines it as "a word which is used at the beginning of a noun group to indicate, for example, which thing you are referring to or whether you are referring to one thing or several."

Types of Determiners

Determiners are classified into four main types namely,

- Articles (such as 'a', 'an', and 'the')
- Possessive Determiners (such as 'my', 'your', 'his', 'her', 'its', 'our' and 'their')
- Demonstrative Determiners (such as 'this', 'that', 'those' and 'these')
- Quantifiers (such as 'some', 'a few', 'many', 'a little', 'little', 'few', 'none', etc)
- Distributive Determiners (such as 'every', 'each', 'either', 'neither', 'both', 'all', 'half', etc.)

Examples of Determiners – Learn How They Are Used

Here are a few examples of determiners to help you learn how exactly they are used in sentences.

- *My* house is being renovated.
- *This* movie is interesting.

- I bought *some* apples and mangoes.
- She gifted me *an* autographed copy of my favourite book.
- Vanessa liked *the* dress I gave her.
- Santana and Brittany sang *a* song together.
- *The* Glee Club of William McKinley High School won *the* International Acapella Championship.
- Rachel offered to make *the* dessert.
- *A few* girls have gone to practise for *the* Teachers day programme.
- I need *those* books I had given you last month.

Check Your Understanding of Determiners in English

Go through the following sentences and fill in the blanks by choosing the most suitable determiner from the box given below.

The, this, a, that, a few, a, some, every, the, any, an,

1. There are _____ students who have not brought their science records.
2. We have _____ document you asked for.
3. Can you sing _____ song for me?
4. _____ comic is really intriguing.
5. Nobody understood anything _____ teacher taught.
6. I just had _____ apple and _____ milk.
7. Do you have _____ food left?
8. Does Lily have _____ pet?
9. _____ story you told me was very moving.
10. Tina forgot to bring _____ spectacles to work.

Now, check out the following section to see if you have filled in the blanks with the correct determiner.

1. There are **a few** students who have not brought their science records.
2. We have **every** document you asked for.
3. Can you sing **a** song for me?
4. **This** comic is really intriguing.

5. Nobody understood anything **the** teacher taught.
6. I just had **an** apple and **some** milk.
7. Do you have **any** food left?
8. Does Lily have **a** pet?
9. **That** story you told me was very moving.
10. Tina forgot to bring **her** spectacles to work.

Determiners Exercises with Answers

Work out the exercises given below and also check the answers to see if you got everything right.

Exercise 1: Complete the sentences with the right determiners.

Complete the sentences given below with the suitable determiners given in brackets.

1. Meg used ___ sketch pens to complete her project. (this/these)
2. I had ___ rice today. (enough/all)
3. ___ picture was painted by Picasso. (that/those)
4. The book belongs to ___. (her/hers)
5. Can you give me ___ notebook? (the/an)
6. Sam stood ___ in the class. (first/one)
7. Mave is ___ honest man. (a/an)
8. ___ students were called to the principal's office. (any/some)
9. Do you know ___ scarf this is? (whose/their)
10. ___ Qutub Minar belongs to the Sultanate Period in India. (an/the)
11. ___ box of chocolates belongs to Rachel. (these/that)
12. Is there ___ food left in the fridge? (many/any)
13. Can I get ___ hot bowl of soup? (a/an)
14. There aren't ___ boys in the park. (some/any)
15. Freya got ___ beautiful souvenir from Paris. (a/an)

Answers –

1. These
2. Enough
3. That
4. Her
5. The

6. First
7. An
8. Some
9. Whose
10. The
11. That
12. Any
13. A
14. Any
15. A

Exercise 2: Fill the blanks with right determiners

Read the passage and fill in the blanks with appropriate determiners.

Once upon __ time, there lived __ king who was known for __ judgements. One day ___ women came holding __ baby, and both claimed they were __ mothers. Both women were crying hard for __ baby, and __ king was finding it difficult to believe who was saying ___ truth. So ___ king asked ___ guards to cut ___ baby in half and give ___ half to both ___ women. ___ woman who was holding __ baby accepted ___ decision whereas ___ other woman started begging ___ king to give ___ baby to the other woman. Seeing ___, the king immediately understood who __ real mother was. The king said that __ real mother would never let __ harm befall on __ child, and that is why the second woman asked to give away the child to the first woman. She did not want any harm on __ child and would rather give the baby away to someone else. Finally __ king gave __ baby to __ real mother.

Answers –

Once upon **a** time, there lived **a** king who was known for **his** judgments. One day **two** women came holding **a** baby, and both claimed they were **the** mothers. Both women were crying hard for **the** baby, and **the** king was finding it difficult to believe who was saying **the** truth. So **the** king asked **the** guards to cut **the** baby in half and give **each** half to both **the** women. **The** woman who was holding **the** baby accepted **that** decision whereas **the** other woman started begging **the** king to give **the** baby to the other woman. Seeing **this**, the king immediately understood who **the** real mother was. The king said that **a** real mother would never let **any** harm befall on **her** child, and that is why the second woman asked to give away the child to the first woman. She did not want any harm on **her** child and would rather give the baby away to someone else. Finally, **the** king gave **the** baby to **its** real mother.

What Is a Demonstrative Determiner?

A demonstrative, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, refers to words “pointing out the one referred to and distinguishing it from others of the same class (as in ‘that’ in ‘that house’)”. That should help you understand what a demonstrative determiner is. A demonstrative determiner can be said to be those words which demonstrate as well as introduce the [noun](#) in the sentence. Demonstrative determiners include determiners such as ‘this’, ‘that’, ‘these’ and ‘those’. They are seen to appear right before the noun it determines.

Examples of Demonstrative Determiners

Let us look at some sentence examples to see how demonstrative determiners are made use of.

- I have heard *this* song before.
- Do you know where *these* books have to be kept?
- Can you help me with *this* lesson?
- Blaine has not returned *that* book.
- *This* place is way too beautiful than you had described.
- Do you know where *this* piece goes?
- Did you finish *that* crossword puzzle?
- I have never been to any of *these* places.
- *That* girl looks a lot like my sister.
- *Those* papers have to be sent to the head of the department for approval.
- Don't you think *this* year has been much better than the last one?

Check Your Understanding of Demonstrative Determiners

Read through the following sentences and fill in the blanks with the most appropriate demonstrative determiner.

1. Have you ever felt _____ way before?
2. _____ advice you gave me really helped.
3. Do you know where _____ files were stored?
4. Can you tell me where to put up _____ poster?
5. _____ movie is definitely better than the other one we watched last week.
6. _____ girls did put on a great show.
7. Have you met _____ person who is standing in front of the main door?

8. All _____ students who had not completed their assignments were asked to stay back at school and complete it.
9. I can never forget _____ day.
10. Most of _____ newspapers have published the news of the annual film festival.

The answers for the exercise are given below. Go through them and find out if you have done it right.

1. Have you ever felt **this** way before?
2. **That** advice you gave me really helped.
3. Do you know where **these** files were stored?
4. Can you tell me where to put up **this** poster?
5. **This** movie is definitely better than the other one we watched last week.
6. **Those** girls did put on a great show.
7. Have you met **that** person who is standing in front of the main door?
8. All **those** students who had not completed their assignments were asked to stay back at school and complete it.
9. I can never forget **that** day.
10. Most of **these** newspapers have published the news of the annual film festival.