Determiners

Determiners are words that come before nouns. They contain several classes of words, including pronouns and adjectives.

Points to Ponder:
(i) They determine or limit the noun by giving some additional information about it.
(ii) Determiners show whether a noun refers to is *a general* or *a specific object, person,* or *place.*
(iii) They indicate which or how many things the noun refers to.

Note: Determiners define or limit a noun to the singular or plural. They indicate the amount or quantity. Determiners and nouns together make noun phrases. They make noun phrases with adjectives too. Determiners may precede numerals too.

Determiners do not describe a noun; they determine or point it out. Look at these:
- **the** book
- **every** city
- **some** celebrities
- **his** pet
- **my** friends
- **those** cars
- **no** participants
- **some** candidates

Kinds of Determiners:

1. *Articles (a, an, the)*
2. *Demonstratives (this, that, these, those)*
3. *Possessives (my, our, your, his, her, its, their)*
4. *Distributives (either, neither, each, every*
5. *Determiners of quantity and number (some, any, much, several, minor, less, enough, no).* **Note:** It also includes – *first, second, etc., many, either, neither, few, fewer etc.*
6. *Interrogatives (what, which, whose, etc.)*

***Some* examples:**

1. Lonavala is **a** beautiful region.

2. **Some** students missed their piano class.
3. **Our** athletes are well-mannered.
4. **All** winners of the awards were absent.
5. **This** novel is too old.

Use of Articles

A, An

1. 'A' and 'An' are used before countable nouns in the singular number, e.g. 'a question' or 'an answer.' 'A' and 'An' are used before a noun to show that it is not specific.

2. 'A' is used before consonant sounds, e.g. a car, a hat, a mat, a woman, etc.

3. 'A' is used if a word is spelled with a vowel but has a consonant sound, a unit, a university. Here 'u' has the consonant sound of 'y'.

4. 'A' is used in the following expressions: a pleasure, a toothache, a loud thud, a headache, a shame, a bad cold, a nuisance, etc.

5. 'An' is used before a vowel sound, e.g. an eagle, an egg, etc.

6. 'An' is also used if the word is spelled with a consonant but has a vowel sound e.g. an hour, an honorable man etc.

The

1. 'The' can be used with both countable and uncountable nouns.

2. It is used to show that the noun is specific, e.g. *The first railway line in India was laid in Thane, Maharashtra.*

3. 'The' is used with a noun that has already been mentioned.
   e.g. *He is looking for a book.* (not specific)
   This is the book he was looking for. (specific)

4. 'The' is also used when a noun is preceded by a superlative adjective

- the longest day.

5. 'The' is used for common nouns, e.g. the earth, the sun, the moon, and the sky.

6. 'The' is used with uncountable nouns if indicating specifics, e.g.
   The water is clean.
   The curd has gone sour.

7. If an unspecific meaning is indicated, 'the' is not used, e.g. Water is an important component of our food.

8. 'The' is used when we refer to a whole group of people - the Indians, the good, the bad etc.

9. 'The' is used before mountain ranges, rivers, canals, oceans, deserts, holy books, etc. e.g. the Bible, the Himalayas, the Ganges, the Pacific Ocean.

10. 'The' is used before the names of newspapers, government departments, museums, and libraries, e.g. the Ministry of Education, The Hindu.

11. 'The' is not used before the names of persons, continents, cities, holidays, days of the week, months, subjects of study, etc. We cannot say the Obama, the New Delhi etc.

12. No articles are needed with the names of diseases, meals, languages, days, etc. e.g. It is wrong to say the malaria, the dinner, The Wednesday, etc.

Each, Every, All

'Every' indicates a single unit in a group. **'Each'** refers to individual members of a small group, while '**every'** member of a large group. Sometimes, **everyone** can be used. E.g.
Each of her three brothers was educated.
Every Indian must cast his/her vote.
Every/Each one was given alms.

'All' are used to indicate the whole group rather than its components, e.g. *All* the students of CBSE grade X A has passed the examination.

Use of Determiners of Quantity:

Many, Much, Some, Any

Many is used only with plural nouns and to show a large number.
Much is used with uncountable nouns indicating a large quantity.
E.g. Shreya does not have *many* friends.
They had so *much* fun.

Few, A Few, The Few

'Few' means very small numbers, not enough, and below expectation. **'A few'** indicate some numbers. **'The few'** indicates very small specific numbers, e.g.
Few students are interested in learning codings.
A few students are good at German.

The few good students usually come from literate families.

Little, A Little

Look at these two sentences.

They had **little** rain this year in their village.
They had **a little** rain this year in their village.

'Little' is used when the speaker wants to convey the meaning 'not enough or below expectation'.

Note: *Little* expresses a negative meaning.

'A little' is used when the speaker wants to convey the meaning a small amount but not much.

Note: *A little* expresses a positive meaning.

Some, Any

'Some' and **'Any'** show not a very large quantity. **Some** are used in affirmative sentences, e.g. There is some water in the bucket. **Any** is used in interrogative or negative sentences, e.g. Is there any water in the bucket? There isn't any water in the bucket.

Now, look at these sentences.
- She hasn't got **any** roses in her garden.
- There isn't **any** milk left in the tetrapack.

'Any' is used in *negative statements* with countable plural nouns like roses and uncountable nouns like milk.

Use of Interrogatives

Determiners that are used for **framing questions** are called **interrogatives.**
'What', 'which', 'whose,' 'how much, 'how many' are interrogative determiners. e.g. 'whose house', 'which city', 'how many rulers', 'how much water', 'what money' etc.

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