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Marks	2.76/4.00
Grade	6.90 out of 10.00 (69%)

Information

Grammar Definite and indefinite articles



A noun (a person, place, thing, or idea) is often introduced by an article. Different types of nouns can use different articles. Understanding the context in which a noun occurs will help you use articles correctly.

	Singular count noun	Plural count noun	Noncount noun
Indefinite article	<i>a</i> + consonant sound <i>an</i> + vowel sound	no article	no article
Definite article	<i>the</i>	<i>the</i>	<i>the</i>

Indefinite articles with nonspecific nouns

Use *a/an* or no article when a noun is not specifically identified or is unknown to the reader; for example, the first time you mention a noun.

- We were excited to have **a new car**. (This is the first reference to *a new car*. The reader does not know about it yet.)
- We bought **fish** for dinner. (No article is used with noncount nouns.)

You also use no article with plural count nouns or noncount nouns to refer to something in general.

- Shoppers** can get a great deal of information from window displays. (*Shoppers* refers to any shopper, not a specific shopper.)

Definite articles with specific nouns

Use *the* when a noun is specifically identified. Both the reader and the writer know the noun because they share information about it. For example:

- The noun was already introduced.
 - We were excited to have **a new car**, but **the car** we chose was terrible! (*A new car* was introduced earlier in the sentence.)
- The noun relates directly to something else that you introduced.
 - Let's go to Ben's Diner. **The owners** are really friendly, and **the soup** is delicious. (The reader and writer both know that *the owners* refers to the owners of Ben's Diner, and *the soup* is served at Ben's Diner.)
- The noun is unique so the reader will know what you are referring to.
 - The Internet** has changed the way people look for homes. (There is only one Internet. It is unique.)
 - The government** should do more about false advertising. (You can assume the reader will know which government you are referring to.)

Click here for the Communicative Grammar Teaching Notes

Tip for Success

Using *the* is not the only way to refer to a specific noun. You may also identify specific nouns with possessive adjectives (*my, your, their*, etc.), demonstrative adjectives (*this, that, these, or those*), or quantifiers (*two, many, or some*).



Question 1

Partially correct Mark 2.76 out of 4.00

the The an zero a

Fill in the blanks with the articles *a, an, the*, or *zero*.

Shopping Spree

Recently, my friend won ✓ contest. ✗ **[The]** prize for ✓ contest was ✓ shopping spree at

house and needed ✓ furniture. ✗ **[the]** furniture she had at her apartment was not enough to fill ✗ **[the]** new house. ✓ first thing that she bought at ✓ store was ✗ **[the]** furniture for ✗ **[the]** living room. She chose ✓ beautiful green sofa with ✓ matching chairs. She also selected ✓ coffee table made from ✓ wood and ✓ glass. Next she decided on ✓ oak dining room table with eight chairs. My friend likes to have ✓ friends come over for dinner, so ✓ table will be perfect for ✓ dinner parties. Last, my friend bought ✓ new bed with ✗ **[a]** new mattress and ✓ sheets and ✓ pillows. She says that ✗ **[the]** bed is so comfortable. My friend had enough ✓ money to spend that she didn't need her old furniture anymore. She donated it to ✗ **[a]** charity shop. She loves her new house.

Your answer is partially correct.

Finish review

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