**Proper article**

A **proper** article indicates that its [noun is proper](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proper_noun), and refers to a unique entity. It may be the name of a person, the name of a place, the name of a planet, etc. The [Maori language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maori_language) has the proper article *a*, which is used for personal nouns; so, "a Pita" means "Peter". In Maori, when the personal nouns have the definite or indefinite article as an important part of it, both articles are present; for example, the phrase "a Te Rauparaha", which contains both the proper article *a* and the definite article *Te* refers to the person name [Te Rauparaha](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Te_Rauparaha).

The definite article is sometimes also used with [proper names](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proper_noun), which are already specified by definition (there *is* just one of them). For example: *the Amazon, the Hebrides*. In these cases, the definite article may be considered superfluous. Its presence can be accounted for by the assumption that they are shorthand for a longer phrase in which the name is a specifier, i.e. *the Amazon River*, *the Hebridean Islands*. Where the nouns in such longer phrases cannot be omitted, the definite article is universally kept: *the United States*, *the People's Republic of China*. This distinction can sometimes become a political matter: the former usage *the Ukraine* stressed the word's Russian meaning of "borderlands"; as [Ukraine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukraine) became a fully independent state following the [collapse of the Soviet Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collapse_of_the_Soviet_Union), it requested that formal mentions of its name omit the article. Similar shifts in usage have occurred in the names of [Sudan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sudan) and both [Congo (Brazzaville)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_(Brazzaville)) and [Congo (Kinshasa)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo); a move in the other direction occurred with [The Gambia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Gambia). In certain languages, such as French and Italian, definite articles are used with all or most names of countries: *la France/le Canada/l'Allemagne, l'Italia/la Spagna/il Brasile*.

If a name [has] a definite article, e.g. [*the Kremlin*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moscow_Kremlin), it cannot idiomatically be used without it: we cannot say [*Boris Yeltsin*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boris_Yeltsin)*is in Kremlin*.

— [*R. W. Burchfield*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Burchfield)

Some languages also use definite articles with [personal names](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_name). For example, such use is standard in [Portuguese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portuguese_language) (*a Maria*, literally: "the Maria"), in [Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language) (η Μαρία, ο Γιώργος, ο Δούναβης, η Παρασκευή) and in [Catalan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catalan_language) (la Núria, el/en Oriol). It can also occur colloquially or dialectally in [Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language), [German](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_language), [French](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_language), [Italian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_language) and other languages. In [Hungary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungary), the use of definite articles with personal names is considered to be a [Germanism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germanism_(linguistics)).

This usage can appear in American English for particular nicknames. One prominent example occurs in the case of United States President [Donald Trump](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Trump), who is also sometimes informally called "The Donald" in speech and in print media. Another is President [Ronald Reagan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan)'s most common nickname, "The Gipper", which is still used today in reference to him.