

Session 2

Most of us love to talk about our holidays and travels – and in English, that means using articles. So, when and how should we use them? In this session, Emma hears some more travellers' tales as we explore the rules of the articles **a**, **an** and **the**.

Activity 1

Learn the language: articles

A virtual postcard

It's good to keep in touch with friends when they go abroad - but not when they're bragging about their holiday. Rob sent Emma a message from a very exciting location. Take a look - and listen out for the articles **a** and **an**.

Show transcript

Did you notice the articles Rob used in his virtual postcard? Here is an explanation of how and when to use **a** and **an**. Have a read, and try the activity to test your understanding.

Articles 'a' and 'an': meaning and use

a or **an** means one person or thing.

We use **a** or **an**:

- 1) before singular nouns: *I've been to **a** concert. We had **a** great day and we saw **an** elephant.*
- 2) before the name of a job: *My sister wants to be **an** engineer.*

Articles and adjectives

Adjectives go between a or an and the noun: *What a great place this is! I went on an amazing trip.*

A or an?

Use **a** before consonant sounds: **a** chair, **a** horse, **a** laptop

This includes letters **u** or **eu** when they are pronounced **y** (/j/): **a** university, **a** euro

Use **an** before vowel sounds. These words usually start with **a**, **e**, **i**, **o**, **u**: **an** architect, **an** idea, **an** umbrella

Also use **an** with words that start with the letter **h** when the **h** is not pronounced: **an** hour, **an** honour

To do

Now check your understanding with this activity. Look at the notes if you need help.

Download

[Click here](#) to download the video (size: 15.2MB).

Next

How was that? Easy? Well there are more rules about articles to learn on the next page. Prepare to hear more travel stories and learn about using articles with place names.

