

Grammar Reference

Zero article

Here are some rules:

Use **zero article (-)** with:

The names of most countries, cities and continents: *Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Warsaw, Beijing, Europe, Asia*
Geographical areas in adjective phrases: *I live in (-) north-west Egypt, (-) eastern France*
The names of single mountains and lakes: *Mount Kilimanjaro, Lake Titicaca*
Exact days, months and times: *on (-) Friday, in (-) March, at (-) 7 o'clock*
Some prepositional phrases of place: *at (-) home, at (-) work, in (-) bed, at (-) sea*

Use **the** with:

Countries with plural names or with Republic or Kingdom in the name: *The United Arab Emirates, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom*
Geographical areas in noun phrases: *I live in the north-west of Egypt, in the east*
The names of rivers, seas, oceans and mountain ranges: *The Mississippi, The Black Sea, The Atlantic, The Urals*
Parts of the day: *in the morning/afternoon/evening*
Most prepositional phrases of position and place: *at the top, on the left, at the office/bank/cinema*

Take note: school/university, etc.

There is a special rule for these places: school, university, college, hospital, prison, church. Compare these examples:

*The children go **to school** by bus. I go **to the school** to help twice a week.*

*Ben's studying maths **at university**. He works in the canteen **at the university**.*

*She was **in hospital** for three weeks. Is there a shop **in the hospital**?*

If someone is at the place because they are a student / are sick / a prisoner, etc, we don't use **the**. If they are there for another reason, or we are talking about the building, we use **the**.

For more information about articles, try this [grammar reference](#).

Pronunciation Tips

Pronouncing the 'th' sound

Lightly place your fingers on your throat so you can feel when you pronounce a voiced sound.

Learn the symbols that represent the sounds of English.

