

Articles

INDEFINITE ARTICLES

Indefinite Articles - Introduction

There are two indefinite articles, namely, 'a' and 'an'.

We use 'an' when the word that follows starts with a vowel sound.

All other cases use 'a' as the indefinite article.

They are used to identify a person or thing that is unspecific or generic.

Indefinite articles are only used before singular nouns.

Indefinite Articles – Examples #1

We use 'an' when the word that follows starts with a vowel sound.

All other cases use 'a' as the indefinite article.

- *An* elephant.
- *A* big elephant.
- *A* pear.
- *An* SMS.
- *A* hotel.
- *An* hour.
- herb? (UK/US)

Indefinite Articles – Examples #2

They are used to identify a person or thing that is unspecific or generic.

- It's dark in here – can you turn on *a* light?
- I'm still waiting for *an* answer.
- There's *an* angry customer wanting to speak to the manager.
- I'll take *a* message for you – I just need to find *a* pen.

Indefinite Articles – Examples #3

We use the indefinite article for jobs, nationalities and religions.

- Sam is *a* doctor.
- Peter is *an* electrician.
- Pierre is *a* Frenchman.
- *An* Englishman's home is his castle.
- Sister Mary is *a* Catholic nun.
- Christianity is *an* Abrahamic religion, as is Islam.

Indefinite Articles – Examples #4

We also use the indefinite article instead of the number 1.

Using 1 instead is also correct here.

- I'd like *a* pound of apples and four lemons.
- I'd like one pound of apples and four lemons.
- This recipe is very sweet – it need a kilo of sugar.
- I'm in a hurry – I can only stay for *a* minute.