

## Articles: Definite and Indefinite

**FORM:**        **Definite: THE**                            **Indefinite: A, AN**

### USES:

- **a** is used with singular countable nouns that begins with a consonant:    *a dog, a pineapple*
- **an** is used with singular countable nouns that begins with a vowel sound: *an apple, an office*  
Note: *a uniform* (here, the u has a consonant sound like yellow); *an hour* (here, the h is silent)
- **the** can be used with **singular** or **plural** nouns, or with **uncountable** nouns:  
*the teacher, the people, the water*
- **a** is used to speak of a thing in **general**:    *A chair has legs. = Chairs have legs.*  
Which chair has legs? All chairs have legs.  
Note: There is no article when the noun, used in a general way, is plural.
- **the** is used to speak of a **specific** thing:    **The** desk in Carol’s office is broken.  
Which desk is broken? The desk in Carol’s office.
- **a** is used when the speaker uses a noun for the first **time** (unspecific): **A** woman is crossing the road.  
Which woman is crossing the road?
- **the** is used if the noun is used again. (specific):    John has **a** T-shirt on. **The** T-shirt is purple.  
Which T-shirt is purple?
- **the** is not used with most proper names: Canada, Montreal, David
- **the** is used if there is a clause (indicated here with [ ] ) modifying the noun: **The** man who is standing on the corner [is my brother].
- **the** is used:  
With job titles if only one person has that title: *the President, the pope*  
With things that are unique if they are singular: *the Eiffel Tower*, but *Niagara Falls*  
With names that include ‘of’: *The United States of America*  
With countries whose names are in a plural form: *The Netherlands*  
With groups of islands if their names are plural: *The Bahamas, The Philippines*  
With nationalities: **the** Egyptians, **the** Swiss, **the** British  
With rivers, seas and oceans: **the** Saint-Lawrence, **the** Atlantic  
With mountains, deserts and forests: **the** Rockies, **the** Amazon, **the** Sahara

Beginner II – Exercise 1 – Articles: Definite and Indefinite

Write AN, A or Ø (no article).

1. Adam likes \_\_\_\_\_ cats.
2. Her boyfriend gave her \_\_\_\_\_ umbrella.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ yoghurt is good for you.
4. There is \_\_\_\_\_ lamp on my desk.
5. There are \_\_\_\_\_ students in the classroom.
6. Frank bought \_\_\_\_\_ blue pen.
7. Luke went to \_\_\_\_\_ Niagara Falls on vacation last month.

Write THE or Ø (no article).

1. “\_\_\_\_\_ music on the radio is too boring; please, change the station!”
2. I saw \_\_\_\_\_ House of \_\_\_\_\_ Parliament in \_\_\_\_\_ Ottawa, \_\_\_\_\_ White House in \_\_\_\_\_ Washington and \_\_\_\_\_ Kremlin in \_\_\_\_\_ Moscow.
3. I walked \_\_\_\_\_ streets of \_\_\_\_\_ New York, \_\_\_\_\_ Berlin, and \_\_\_\_\_ Singapore last year.
4. He came here directly from \_\_\_\_\_ Mexico.
5. They say that \_\_\_\_\_ Greek people are friendly.
6. Mr. and Mrs. Henderson are now traveling in \_\_\_\_\_ Brazil.
7. He has always lived in \_\_\_\_\_ United Kingdom.
8. Does John speak \_\_\_\_\_ English well?
9. Last year Hanna visited \_\_\_\_\_ Czech Republic and \_\_\_\_\_ Philippines.
10. They crossed \_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Ocean.

Beginner II – Exercise 1 – Articles: Definite and Indefinite

*Use A, AN, THE or Ø (no article).*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ tea which we import from \_\_\_\_\_ China is now very expensive.
2. When we were in \_\_\_\_\_ Italy, we saw \_\_\_\_\_ Leaning Tower of Pisa.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ American businessmen staying in that hotel use their cell phones a lot.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ American businessmen often tip very well.
5. We all took a walk along \_\_\_\_\_ 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ buses on Sherbrooke Street move very slowly.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Professor Lundy chaired yesterday's meeting.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ President will speak about his economic plan at the next summit.
9. When we were in \_\_\_\_\_ British Columbia, we climbed \_\_\_\_\_ Rocky Mountains.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor Jones is an excellent surgeon.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ doctor told me that I must rest more.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ food at that restaurant is very healthy.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ book, which Sam is reading now, belongs to Helen.
14. There is \_\_\_\_\_ apple on \_\_\_\_\_ table in the kitchen.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ cabin that John is building has \_\_\_\_\_ stone fireplace.
16. The group plans to travel down \_\_\_\_\_ Ganges next summer.
17. He wants to make a reservation at \_\_\_\_\_ same hotel he stayed in last time.
18. When I was in \_\_\_\_\_ Toronto, I spoke to \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor.