

1. Articles

'a', 'an' and 'the' are **articles**.

When we speak or write English, we often use these **3 articles**.

Students or teachers sometimes don't pay much attention to this topic because they think the difference between 'a' and 'an' is not really important.

However, not using articles correctly shows quickly that the language has not been learned in a proper way. In addition, this topic 'articles' is about much more than only 'a', 'an' and 'the'.

Articles are interesting and not difficult to learn. What do articles do in sentences?

1. An article gives more clarity about a noun.

Examples:

"**The** dog is barking too loudly." '**The**' is **specific**. We talk about a **specific** (definite) dog.

"Jamie really needs **a** helmet." '**a**' is **general**. **a** helmet means: a helmet **in general** (indefinite), not a specific helmet.

In short:

1. An article **brings clarity about a noun whether it is specific or general**.

- When we use the article '**the**', we talk about a **specific** (definite) **person, thing or animal**.
- When we use the articles '**a**' or '**an**' we talk about a **general** (indefinite) **person, thing or animal**.
- Articles come at the **beginning of the noun phrase**.

Attention, we have to choose between 'a' and 'an'. We only use one of them at the same time. There are some rules for choosing between 'a' and 'an'. We will show them in the next examples.

Examples:

a or an (general/indefinite)	the (specific/definite)
1. We want to live on an island .	1. The sun is up.
2. She likes to eat an apple every day.	2. Here comes the train .
3. We always stay in a hotel on our holidays.	3. We obeyed the rules .
4. I never use an umbrella when it rains.	4. I saw him wash the car .
5. A student returned the books.	5. Did you watch the game ?
6. I'm looking for a camera to use during Christmas.	6. We agreed to the plan .
7. Bob must have had an accident .	7. The train has arrived.
8. They need an oven for their new kitchen.	8. I've heard the story .

2. When do we also use the general (indefinite) articles 'a' or 'an'?

A. Phrases of time and measurement are preceded by 'a' or 'an'. (monthly, yearly, daily)

We eat rice 5 times **a week**.

I clean my bedroom thoroughly **twice a month**.

Cucumbers are \$1 **a kilo**.

a, e, i, o, and u are vowels.

Use an with vowels:

an apple

an egg

an incident

B. Before phrases of professions/jobs.

My father is **a musician**.

His brother is **an engineer**.

C. With a noun complement

He is **a fantastic golf player**.

D. Before phrases of nationality

That's **an American helicopter**.

E. Half/quite

I want to buy **half a pound** of strawberries.

That's **quite an astonishing story**.

All letters of the alphabet **except** a, e, i, o, and u are consonants:

b,c,d,f,g,h,j,k,l,m,n,p,q,r,s,t,v,w,x,y,z

Use 'a' before a consonant.

A woman, a computer, a fan

3. The use of 'a'/'an' and 'the' more closely viewed:

As told above, we must **choose between 'a' and 'an'**.

A. The general article 'a'

We use **'a' in the same way for all genders**.

a man

a woman

a dog

There is **no plural** form of the general article 'a' because **we use 'a' only before singular, countable nouns**.

a girl girls (there is not something like ~~'a girls'~~)

a dog dogs (~~a dogs~~)

We use **'a'** before a **spoken consonant**.

Examples:

a police officer.

a watch

a lamp

All letters of the alphabet **except** a, e, i, o, and u are consonants:

b,c,d,f,g,h,j,k,l,m,n,p,q,r,s,t,v,w,

Attention

Sometimes the first letter can be a vowel but in the pronunciation you hear a consonant. **The spoken letter is decisive.**

Example:

a unit - **a** university: 'unit' and 'university' start with a written vowel (u). However, when we say these words, we hear a 'j' (junit, juniversity). This 'j' is a spoken consonant and we must therefore let these words be preceded by 'a'.

B. The general article 'an'

We use the article 'an' before a vowel.

Examples:

an apple

an ostrich

an elephant

an organic restaurant

The letters a,e,i,o, and u are vowels.

Adjectives can change articles

We learned that when the nouns begin with a vowel, the correct article to use is 'an'. When the noun begins with a consonant, the correct article is 'a'.

However, **when we add an adjective in front of the noun, the article can change.**

If the adjective begins with a vowel, the article is 'an'. If the adjective starts with a consonant, the article should be 'a'.

Example:

An elephant

A **l**arge elephant.

A **n**ice elephant.

An **e**motional elephant.

Exercise 1 Write 'a', 'an' behind countable nouns. Write 'the' behind uncountable nouns.

apple	1.	university	33.
strawberry	2.	table	34.
water	3.	baby	35.
actor	4.	angel	36.
hole	5.	food	37.
accident	6.	uncle	38.
oven	7.	icon	39.
rice	8.		

snow	9.	airplane	40.
ostrich	10.	plane	41.
sand	11.	bed	42.
elephant	12.	bread	43.
news	13.	uniform	44.
lamp	14.	energy	45.
animal	15.	bathroom	46.
furniture	16.	butter	47.

panda	17.	umbrella	48.
island	18.	garden	49.
chair	19.	education	50.
sheet	20.	chimney	51.
idea	21.	car	52.
bird	22.	engineer	53.
TV	23.	laptop	54.
watch	24.	garage	55.

weather	25.	air	56.
ring	26.	egg	57.
igloo	27.	art	58.
house	28.	tomato	59.
hair	29.	fruit	60.
sunshine	30.	cotton	61.
bag	31.	mug	62.
finger	32.	danger	63.



Exercise 2

Complete the sentences. Use 'a' or 'an'.

1. That is _____ printer.
2. She became _____ actress.
3. They must have had _____ accident.
4. I want to buy _____ raincoat and _____ umbrella.
5. We don't call it a building but _____ unit.
6. This little girl is _____ angel.
7. Do you know the difference between _____ cat and _____ unicorn?
8. Is that _____ boy or _____ girl?
9. She gave him _____ watch.
10. I have _____ idea.
11. When I have enough money, I want to buy _____ iPad.
12. I first need _____ pair of trousers.
13. Do you have _____ English-Japanese dictionary?
14. Is there any difference between _____ plane and _____ airplane?
15. _____ old man sat surrounded by his grandchildren.

Write a, an, or the.

Snow White and _____ Seven Dwarves. (in past simple tense)

1. A long time ago in _____ country far, far away, there lived _____ beautiful princess.
2. _____ princess lived there with her stepmother, _____ queen.
3. The Queen was _____ bad woman.
4. Before Snow White came, _____ queen was always _____ most beautiful lady of her country, but now?
5. In _____ woods lived _____ group of little dwarves. They lived in _____ small house.
6. The queen said: "Mirror, mirror on _____ wall? Who is _____ most beautiful of us all?"
7. _____ mirror was _____ very special mirror. _____ mirror could talk and said:
8. "Snow White is _____ most beautiful of us all."
9. Snow White was afraid of _____ queen. She ran into the woods and said: "Look, there is _____ small house." It was _____ very cute house.
10. The dwarves came home and said: "Somebody cleaned _____ house."
11. The queen changed her clothes. She wanted to look like _____ apple seller.
12. She poisoned _____ apple. She wanted to give _____ poisoned apple to Snow White.
13. The queen said to Snow White: "Do you want to buy _____ apple?"
14. "It's _____ very delicious apple."
15. Snow White ate the apple and fell on _____ floor but _____ beautiful prince came and saved her life.

Exercise 1.

_____ lion and _____ mouse

1. It was _____ hot summer day. _____ sun was shining brightly up in the sky.
2. _____ lion was sitting under the shade of a big tree and fell asleep.
3. Nearby that tree, there was _____ hole in which there lived _____ mouse.
4. When _____ lion was sleeping, _____ mouse came out of its hole and saw _____ sleeping predator.
5. Unaware of _____ lion's strength, it got tickled by _____ idea.
6. It thought of waking up _____ king of the animals by running over his body just for fun.
7. Unfortunately, _____ lion seized it in his strong paw.
8. _____ mouse pleaded for its life. Being generous by nature, _____ lion set it free.
9. _____ mouse promised to help _____ lion if it ever got _____ chance.
10. _____ lion laughed at this.
11. After all, how could a tiny mouse help _____ king of the jungle?
12. _____ few days later, _____ mouse was passing through _____ jungle when he saw the same lion trapped in _____ hunter's net.
13. Immediately, it set to work, gnawing at _____ ropes.
14. Very soon the tiny mouse had set _____ lion free.

Exercise. Write the correct article. Write '0' for no article. Then check the correct column describing that article.

Sentence	General	Specific	Countable Singular	Countable Plural	Uncountable
1. Do you have <u>an</u> apple for me please?	✓		✓		
2. I need _____ money .					
3. Does this city have _____ airport ?					
4. I gave that old man _____ money he needed.					
5. He wanted to buy _____ e-reader .					
6. Do you have time to go to _____ market ?					
7. John said that he had not stolen ___ 200 Euros .					
8. He talks with _____ accent .					
9. He talks with _____ strange accent .					
10, _____ pharmacy is a shop where you can buy medicine.					
11. _____ bottles of water are very cheap here.					
12. In my country, _____ water is much more expensive.					
13. _____ news was not so good this morning.					
14. I prefer to make my drawings on _____ colorful paper .					
15. _____ time that water was cheap is over.					

Choose the correct article(s) for each sentence from column 1, 2, 3, or 4 (no article) and circle. Then complete the sentence with the chosen article 'a'/'an' or 'the' or write '0' for 'no article'. Maybe you have to change some lowercase letters to uppercase.

Phrases	1	2	3	4
1. He was walking down <u>the</u> main street of the village.	a	an	the	0
2. Each village has ____ main street.	a	an	the	0
3. Hamburg is ____ German city.	a	an	the	0
4. ____ milk is good for children.	A	An	The	0
5. ____ living room should be warm in this cold country.	A	An	The	0
6. ____ apples and pears are good for your health.	A	An	The	0
7. ____ furniture is important in a house.	A	An	The	0
8. My nephew has ____ old clock. ____ clock is 73 years old.	a	an	The	0
9. It's easy to find ____ moon at night.	a	an	the	0
10. ____ pencil is a valuable tool.	A	An	The	0
11. ____ village I visited yesterday was very boring.	A	An	The	0
12. ____ European law states that it is forbidden.	A	An	The	0
13. In this area, there are ____ mines everywhere.	a	an	the	0
14. We rarely get ____ information about the accident.	a	an	the	0
15. He collects stamps. ____ stamps are his precious jewels.	A	An	The	0
16. ____ motorcycle he showed me was not the one I needed.	A	An	The	0
17. ____ dark skies indicate that the weather is changing.	A	An	The	0
18. July 14 is ____ French national holiday.	a	an	The	0
19. They commemorate ____ proclamation of the republic.	a	an	the	0

Exercise Adjectives changing Articles

Write the correct article 'a' or 'an'.

1. ____ awesome girl.	16. ____ useless thing.
2. ____ brown table.	17. ____ Islamic mosque.
3. ____ young boy.	18. ____ dark cloud.
4. ____ funny face.	19. ____ icy roof.
5. ____ obedient child.	20. ____ eager student.
6. ____ interesting guy.	21. ____ appropriate decision
7. ____ wet umbrella.	22. ____ angry father.
8. ____ open door.	23. ____ empty box.
9. ____ English book.	24. ____ early bird.
10. ____ icy road.	25. ____ smelly bin.
11. ____ calm grandma.	26. ____ adorable baby.
12. ____ Irish folk song.	27. ____ expensive guitar.
13. ____ big event,	28. ____ Asian country.
14. ____ small girl.	29. ____ full bus.
15. ____ old book.	30. ____ closed shop.

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1 an 2 a 3 the 4 an 5 a 6 an 7 an 8 the 9 the 10 an 11 the 12 an 13 the 14 a
 15 an 16 the 17 a 18 an 19 a 20 a 21 an 22 a 23 a 24 a 25 the 26 a 27 an 28
 a 29 the 30 the 31 a 32 a 33 a 34 a 35 a 36 an 37 the 38 an 39 an 40 an 41
 a 42 a 43 the 44 a 45 the 46 a 47 the 48 an 49 a 50 an/the 51 a 52 a 53 an
 54 a 55 a 56 the 57 an 58 the 59 a 60 the 61 the 62 a 63 the

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1 a 2 an 3 an 4 a, an 5 a 6 an 7 a, a 8 a, a 9 a 10 an 11 an 12 a 13 an 14
 a 15 an

Page 7

Snow White and the Seven Dwarves.

1 a, a 2 The, the 3 a 4 the, the 5 the, a, a 6 the, the 7 The, a, The 8 the 9 the,
 a, a 10 the 11 an 12 an, the 13 an 14 a 15 the, a

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The lion and the mouse.

1 a, The 2 A 3a, a 4 the, the, the, 5 the, an 6 the 7 the 8 The, the 9 The, the a
 10 The 11 the 12 A, the, the, a 13 the 14 the

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Page 10.

Phrases	1	2	3	4
1. He was walking down <u>the</u> main street of the village.	a	an	the	0
2. Each village has a main street.	a	an	the	0
3. Hamburg is a German city.	a	an	the	0
4. 0 Milk is good for children.	A	An	The	0
5. A living room should be warm in this cold country.	A	An	The	0
6. 0 apples and pears are good for your health.	A	An	The	0
7. 0 furniture is important in a house.	A	An	The	0

8. My nephew has an old clock. The clock is 73 years old.	a	an	The	0
9. It's easy to find the moon at night.	a	an	the	0
10. A pencil is a valuable tool.	A	An	The	0
11. The village I visited yesterday was very boring.	A	An	The	0
12. The European law states that it is forbidden.	A	An	The	0
13. In this area are 0 mines everywhere.	a	an	the	0
14. We rarely get 0 information about the accident.	a	an	the	0
15. He collects stamps. The stamps are his precious jewels.	A	An	The	0
16. The motorcycle he showed me was not the one I needed.	A	An	The	0
17. The dark skies indicate that the weather is changing.	A	An	The	0
18. July 14 is a French national holiday.	a	an	The	0
19. They commemorate the proclamation of the republic.	a	an	the	0

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1 An 2 A 3 A 4 A 5 An 6 An 7 A 8 An 9 An 10 An 11 A 12 An 13 A 14 A 15 An 16 A 17 An 18 A 19 An 20 An 21 An 22 An 23 An 24 An 25 A 26 An 27 An 28 An 29 A 30 A

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Sentence	General	Specific	Countable Singular	Countable Plural	Uncountable
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2. I need the (or Ø) money .	✓				✓
3. Does this city have an airport ?	✓		✓		
4. I gave that old man the money he needed.		✓			✓
5. He wanted to buy an e-reader .	✓		✓		
6. Do you have time to go to the market ?		✓	✓		
7. John said that he had not stolen the 200 Euros .		✓		✓	
8. He talks with an accent .	✓		✓		
9. He talks with a strange accent .		✓	✓		
10. A pharmacy is a shop where you can buy medicine.	✓		✓		
11. Ø Bottles of water are very cheap here.		✓		✓	
12. In my country water is much more expensive.	✓				✓

13. The news was not so good this morning.		✓			✓
14. I prefer to make my drawings on colorful paper .	✓				✓
15. The time that water was cheap is over.		✓			✓