

# The Definite Article



Definite Article

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No	Situation	Example
1	The second time you talk about something	I saw a man and a dog. The man and the dog ....
2	It's clear what you're talking about	Can you close the door?
3	Prepositional noun	The interest in the situation was huge
4	Definite noun + adjective clause	The woman that served me was an old friend
5	Only one exists	The Earth has 7 billion people
6	Places in town and specific names of places	I'm going to the supermarket
7	The superlative	That is the biggest building
8	Ordinal numbers	My birthday is on the 24th of April
9	Musical instruments	He plays the piano
10	Groups of people	The unemployed can receive benefits

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No	Situation	Example
11	Institutions	I work for the police
12	Nations	The United Kingdom uses the pound
13	Rivers, oceans, seas, deserts	The River Nile is in Egypt
14	Newspapers	I read The Guardian newspaper
15	Family names	Do you know the Stephenson family?
16	Times of the day	I have breakfast in the morning
17	Preposition (in, on, at, to, from) + compass direction	The sun rises in the east and sets in the west
18	Specific time periods	I'd love to have experienced life in the 1920's
19	Before "same"	I have the same watch as you
20	Body parts with direct object	She hit me in the face

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The second time you talk about something



A man and a dog were walking. The man and the dog ...

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1

The second time you talk about something

It was 1 September 1985. Under a ship in the North Atlantic, a camera moved through the dark water. Slowly, the camera went down - 1,000 metres, 2,000 metres, 3,000 metres under the sea. On the ship, some sailors waited and watched.

Resource: Vicary, T (2000). Titanic. USA: Oxford University Press. P1-22. Adapted by: English E-Reader. (2019). Titanic. Available: <https://english-e-reader.net/online-reader/titanic-tim-vicary>. Last accessed 20th April 2019.

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It's clear what you're talking about



Can you close the door?

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Prepositional noun



The interest in the situation was huge

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Prepositional noun

The interest in the situation was huge

↑

Noun

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Prepositional noun

The interest in the situation was huge

↑

Preposition

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Prepositional noun

The lack of money is causing problems

↑

↑

Noun Preposition

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Definite Noun + Adjective Clause



The woman that served me was an old friend

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Definite Noun + Adjective Clause

The woman that served me was an old friend

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Definite Noun + Adjective Clause


The woman that served me was an old friend

↑

That

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Definite Noun + Adjective Clause


The woman that served me was an old friend

↑

Adjective Clause

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Definite Noun + Adjective Clause


The woman that served me was an old friend

↑   ↑   ↑

Noun   That   Adjective Clause

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Only one exists



The Earth has 7 billion people

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Only one exists


The sun is very hot

The Queen of the UK is Elizabeth II

The solar system is huge and complex

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Places in town and specific names of places



I'm going to the supermarket

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Places in town and specific names of places

I'm going to the hospital

Have you been to the civic theatre before?

Yesterday we were at the shopping centre

I love the natural history museum

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The superlative



That is the biggest building

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Ordinal Numbers



My birthday is on the 24th of April

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She is the fifth person to have said that to me today

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First, you need to chop the onions.  
Second, you need to chop the garlic.  
Third, you need to put the onions and garlic into a pan.

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First place goes to John  
Second place goes to Mary  
Third place goes to Liz

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Musical instruments



He plays the piano

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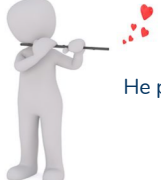
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Musical instruments



He plays the flute

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Groups of people



The unemployed can receive benefits

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Groups of people

The unemployed can receive benefits

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Adjective

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Groups of people

The British drink tea

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Adjective

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Groups of people

The elderly have priority seating on public transport

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the army

the navy

the fire department

the government

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13 Rivers, oceans, seas, deserts



The River Nile is in Egypt

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13 Rivers, oceans, seas, deserts

The United Kingdom is surrounded by the English Channel, the North Sea, the Irish Sea and the Atlantic Ocean

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I read The Guardian newspaper

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Family names

Do you know the Stephenson family?



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Family names

Have you heard from the Wilkinsons recently?

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Times of the day

I have breakfast in the morning



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Times of the day

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In the evening

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Prepositions (in, on, at, to, from) + compass direction



The sun rises in the east and sets in the west

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Prepositions (in, on, at, to, from) + compass direction

She lives on the north coast

We're very far from the south pole

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Specific time periods



I'd love to have experienced life in the 1920's

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Specific time periods

The Ice Age was many years ago

It's difficult to live in the 21st Century

The 30's were a depressing time period

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Before same



I have the same watch as you

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Body parts with direct object



She hit me in the face

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Body parts with direct object

She punched the child on the arm

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