



## Articles

# Articles

What is an article?

How many do we have in  
English?

An article is a short word that provides us with more information about a noun.

Articles exist in most languages, including English, and can provide information about number, gender or case of a noun.

In English, articles provide information about the **definiteness** of a noun.

Although each language has different articles,  
English has 3 main types:

Indefinite articles (a/an)

Definite article (the)

Zero article

All articles are always found before a noun in any sentence.

## Articles

Zero Article

Indefinite Article

Definite Article

1

# The first time you talk about something

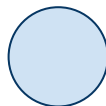
Indefinite Article

A man and a  
dog were  
walking





## Jobs



He's a doctor

Indefinite Article





# Nationalities (noun)

Indefinite Article

I'm a Brit





## Nationalities (noun)



Indefinite Article

I'm British

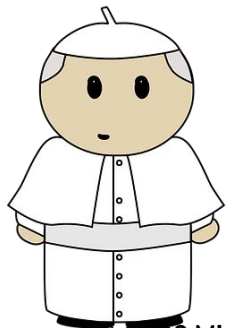
I'm a Brit

4

# Religions (noun)

Indefinite Article

She's a Catholic



# 4

## Religions (noun)



Indefinite Article

She's Catholic

ADJECTIVE

She's a Catholic

NOUN



# Expressions with what

Indefinite Article



What a shame!



# Expressions with what

Indefinite Article

What a pity!

What a beautiful day!

What an idiot!



# Expressions meaning per/ for each

Indefinite Article

I have English class  
four times a week

Timetable

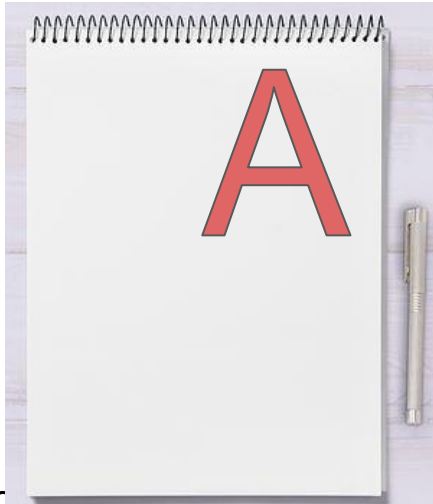
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1		X				
2						
3				X		
4						
5	X					
6						
7			X			
8						



# Single letters and numbers

Indefinite Article

She got an A in her  
exam







# Comparative noun phrases

Indefinite Article

He is a better singer  
than her





# Expressions for quantity

Indefinite Article

I've got a few  
pencils in my hand



# 1 The second time you talk about something

Definite Article

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





# It's clear what you're talking about

Definite Article



Can you close the door?



# Prepositional noun

Definite Article

The interest in the situation was huge



# 4

## Definite Noun + Adjective Clause




The woman that  
served me was an old  
friend

Definite Article

# 5 Only one exists

Definite Article



The Earth has 7  
billion people





# Places in town and specific names of places

Definite Article

I'm going to the supermarket







# The superlative

Definite Article

That is the biggest  
building



# 8 Ordinal Numbers

Definite Article

My birthday is on the  
24th of April



# 9 Musical instruments

Definite Article

He plays the piano



10

# Groups of people

Definite Article

The unemployed can  
receive benefits





# Institutions



I work for the police

Definite Article



# Institutions

the army

the navy

the fire department

the government

Definite Article

# 12 Nations

Definite Article

The United Kingdom  
uses the pound



13

# Rivers, oceans, seas, deserts

Definite Article

The River Nile is in  
Egypt



# 14 Newspapers

Definite Article

I read *The Guardian*  
newspaper

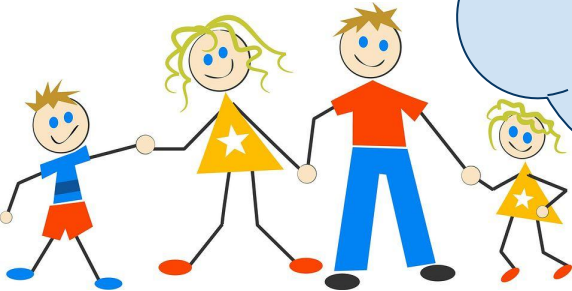


15

# Family names

Definite Article

Do you know the  
Stephenson family?



# 16 Times of the day

Definite Article

I have breakfast in the morning



# 17

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

Definite Article

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

Definite Article



# Before same

Definite Article



I have the same  
watch as you



# Body parts with direct object

Definite Article

She hit me in the face





# Next and last



Next year, we're  
going to France

Zero Article

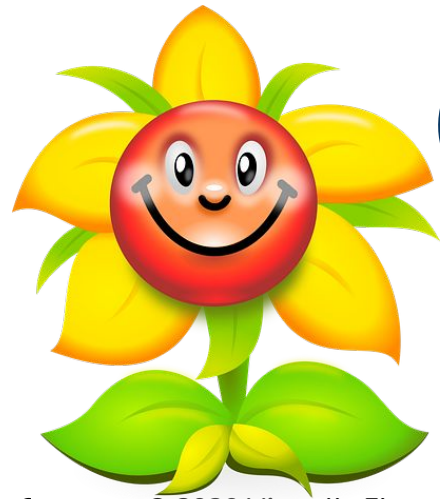




# Plural or uncountable nouns

Zero Article

I love flowers

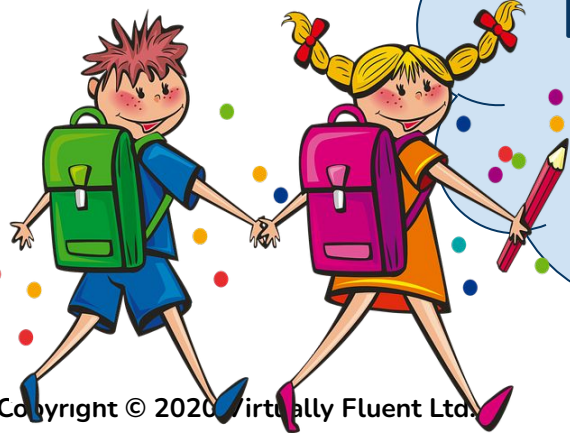


3

Home, work, school, church,  
university, bed, college, class,  
jail

Zero Article

Let's go to school!





# Names of hospitals, schools, churches, shopping centres

Zero Article

A stylized illustration of a hospital building on the left, featuring a red cross on its roof and a grid of blue windows. To its right is a large, light blue cloud containing the text 'I was born in London hospital'.

I was born in London hospital



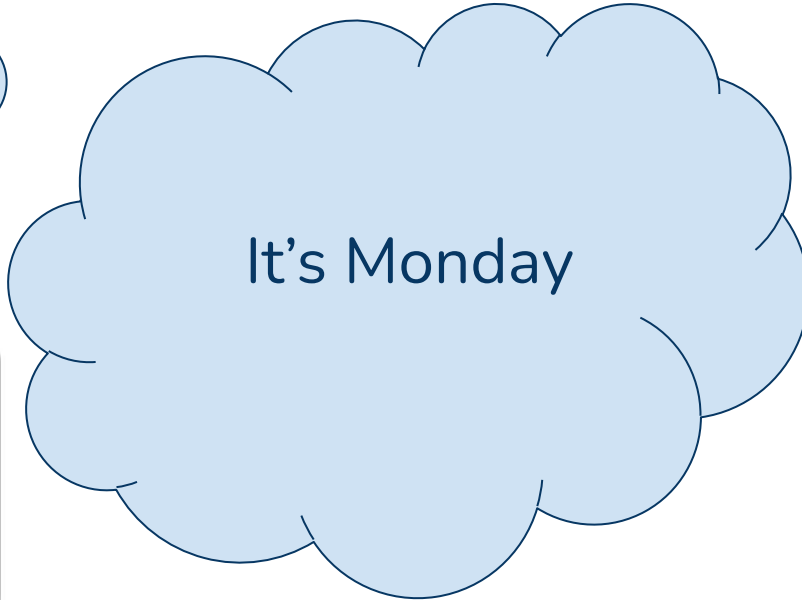
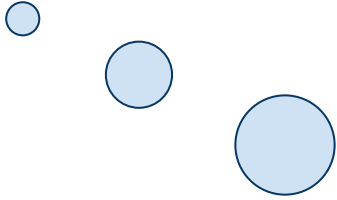
# Meals

Zero Article

When do you want dinner?



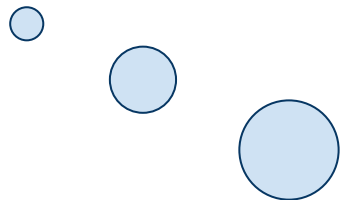
6 Days



Zero Article



# Months



Zero Article

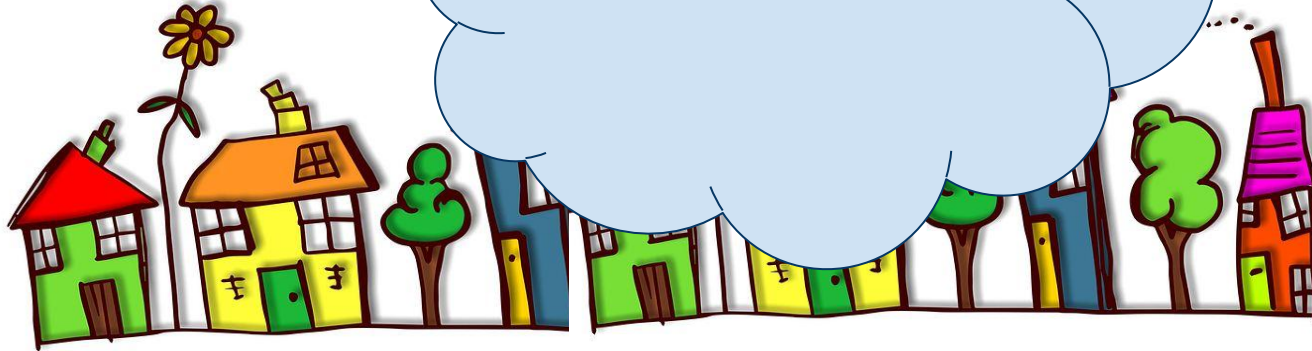




# Names of streets and roads

Zero Article

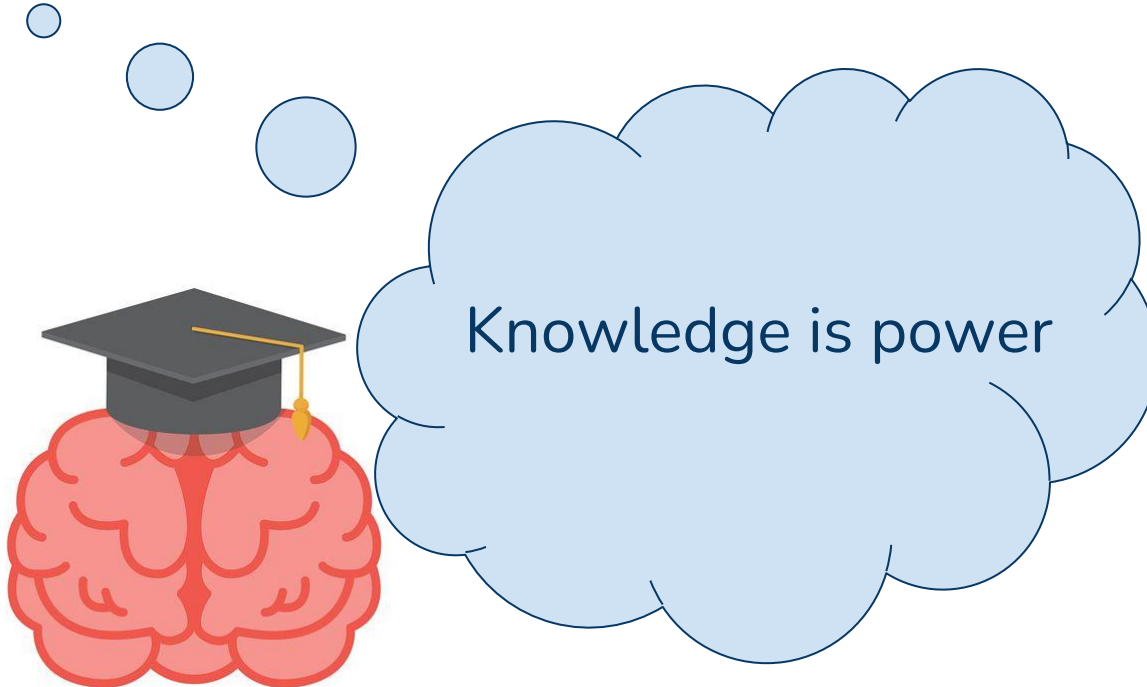
I live on Culver Road





# Abstract Nouns

Zero Article





# 10 Countries

Zero Article

I lived in Spain





# Lakes, mountains and islands

Mount Everest is tall

Zero Article



# 12 Languages

Zero Article

English is a  
widely-spoken language

WILLKOMMEN स्वागत  
欢迎 BIENVENIDA  
WELCOME  
BIENVENUE ようこそ  
добро пожаловать  
ترحيب BEM-VINDO

13

# Go, walk, move + compass direction

Zero Article

We moved north of the city because it was prettier



# 14 Diseases

Zero Article

Cancer kills millions of  
people every year



# 14 Diseases

Zero Article

the flu

the measles

the mumps

the chicken pox

The indefinite articles are a, an and some. We can pronounce these “perfectly” by using the big open sounds.

a  
**/æ/**

an  
**/æn/**

an  
**/sʌm/**

But we can be very lazy in English and, sometimes, use a “weak form” instead. Here, we replace the big vowels with the schwa sound.

a  
**/ə/**

an  
**/ən/**

an  
**/sʌm/**



When we use the articles a and an, we can also introduce connected speech and try to blend them into the words either side.

I have a pen  
and a pencil



The definite article can be pronounced in two different ways. The pronunciation depends on the first sound of the following word.

the  
/ðə/

the  
/ði:/

We use the short vowel pronunciation when the following word starts with a consonant sound.

the  
/ðə/

The dog

The cat

The bird

We use the long vowel pronunciation when the following word starts with a vowel sound.

the  
/ði:/

The elephant

The alligator

The insect



# Practice 1

Fill in the gaps in the board game

<https://virtually-fluent.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/28-Articles-Board-Game.pdf>



# Practice 2

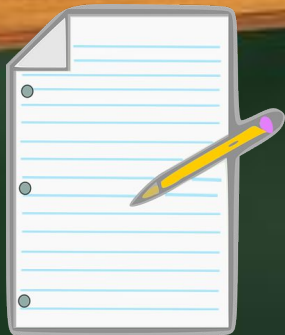
Analyse the text to explain why each article is used.

<https://virtually-fluent.com/topic/articles-analysing-texts/>

# REVIEW



## Articles



# HOMEWORK

## COMPLETE THE QUIZ

Link: <https://virtually-fluent.com/quizzes/articles-grammar-quiz/>