

Articles

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Quick and Handy Grammar Review

ARTICLES

An **article** is a little word that come before a **noun** (a person, place, or thing). English articles include **a**, **an**, and **the**.

A. General Articles: A / An / Ø

Use **a**, **an**, or **Ø (no article)** before a **general** noun. **General** (*indefinite*) means "one of many." In other words, you can't see the noun and/or you don't know which noun it is.

Examples:

- I want to watch **a** movie.
(Any movie is okay. You don't know which movie you want to watch.)
- I bought **a** new bicycle.
(You can't see the bicycle right now.)

SINGULAR NOUNS

Use **a** or **an** before a singular noun that is **general**. *Singular* means **one**. Use **a** before a consonant, and use **an** before a vowel (*a, e, i, o, u*).

- I have **a** cat.
- She has **an** iPhone.

PLURAL NOUNS

Use **Ø (no article)** before a plural noun that is **general**. *Plural* means **two or more**.

- Our family likes animals.
(no article)
- You brought pens and books to class. (*no articles*)

NON-COUNT NOUNS

Use **Ø (no article)** before a non-count (*uncountable*) noun that is **general**. A *non-count noun* is a noun that you can't count because it is too small (*snow, hair*), liquid (*soup, water*), abstract (*love, happiness*), etc.

- He drinks milk every day.
(no article)
- They usually have rice for dinner. (*no article*)

Quick and Handy Grammar Review cont.

B. Specific Article: The

Use **the** before a **specific** noun. **Specific** (*definite*) means you can see the noun and you know which noun it is.

Examples:

- **The** black-and-white puppy is really cute.
(*You can see the puppy, and you know which puppy it is.*)
- I am buying **the** dress that is on sale.
(*You can see the dress, and you know which dress it is.*)

SINGULAR NOUNS

- He likes **the** blue shirt better than **the** green one.
- **The** new rug matches **the** sofa.

PLURAL NOUNS

- **The** students made **the** posters in this room.
- Anyone can use **the** computers at our school.

NON-COUNT NOUNS

- **The** children played in **the** sand all day.
- Here is **the** money that I owe you.

Quick and Handy Grammar Review cont.

C. Chart

	GENERAL (any one / you don't know which one)	SPECIFIC (a certain one / you know which one)
SINGULAR (1)	A or An (singular count noun) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I gave a flower to my mom. 	The (singular count noun) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass me the pen that you're holding.
PLURAL (2 or more)	Ø (plural count noun <i>or</i> non-count noun) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I gave flowers to my mom. I have money in my pocket. 	The (plural count noun <i>or</i> non-count noun) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass me the pens that you're holding. I brought the money that I owe you.

D. Tips

- Use **the** when there is **only one** of the noun.
 - the** sun, **the** moon (in the sky)
 - the** mall, **the** library, **the** hospital (in a city)
- Use **the** for the **second mention** of a noun.
 - I bought **a** laptop yesterday. **The** laptop was expensive.
 - I want **a** new puppy. **The** puppy must be toilet trained.
- Use **the** with a *general* noun when the noun is followed by **that** and information that describes it (called an *adjective clause*).
 - The** shoes **that I wear every day** are red.
 - The** TV **that I want to buy** is really big.
- In most cases, use **a/an/Ø** with a *specific* noun when the sentence starts with "**There is/are**" and includes a preposition. Use **the** after the preposition.
 - There is **a** dog on **the** sofa.
 - There are flowers in **the** vases.

Exercise 1

A OR AN

Complete the sentences using **a** or **an**.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. John wants <u> a </u> pair of jeans. 2. Silvia wants _____ iPad. 3. Atsuko wants _____ bicycle. 4. Maria wants _____ pair of shoes. 5. Bob wants _____ book. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Alfonso wants _____ Apple computer. 7. Lee wants _____ car. 8. Lisa wants _____ electric guitar. 9. Miguel wants _____ skateboard. 10. Sonya wants _____ umbrella. |
|---|---|

Exercise 2

A, AN, OR Ø

Choose the correct noun to complete each sentence.

Part A

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I want a 2. He wants an 3. She wants | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) money. b) e-reader. c) chocolate bar. |
|---|--|

Part B

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you have a 2. Do you have an 3. Do you have | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) time? b) pet? c) iPad? |
|---|---|

Part C

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. She bought an 2. He bought 3. I bought a | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) orange shirt. b) new iPhone. c) colorful paper. |
|---|--|

Exercise 3

A OR THE

Complete the dialogues using **a** or **the**. Write the correct article on the line.

Dialogue A

Tracy: What did you buy yesterday?

Mike: I bought a _{1.} new shirt.

Tracy: What does it look like?

Mike: _{2.} shirt has _{3.} picture of _{4.} sun.

Tracy: Sounds nice! I can't wait to see it.

Dialogue B

Lee: What did you buy yesterday?

Mika: I bought _{1.} new shirt.

Lee: What does it look like?

Mika: _{2.} shirt has _{3.} picture of _{4.} flower.

Lee: Sounds nice! I can't wait to see it.

Dialogue C

Now practice with a partner! Draw an object on the plain shirt and describe it to your partner.

A: What did you buy yesterday?

B: I bought _{1.} new shirt.

A: What does it look like?

B: _{2.} shirt has _{3.} picture of _{4.} _{5.} .

A: Sounds nice! I can't wait to see it.



Exercise 7

A, AN, THE, OR Ø

Class Survey: Ask your classmates these questions, and write their answers in the chart below. Try to speak to a new classmate for each question. Focus on articles when you answer these questions. Write the answers in complete sentences.

#	Question	Classmate	Answer
1	Do you have a pet?		
2	Do you have any brothers or sisters?		
3	Do you have a mobile phone?		
4	Do you want a new car?		
5	Do you want new shoes?		
6	Do you wish you had more money?		
7	What's the name of the movie you like the most?		
8	What's the name of the song you like the least?		
9	Can you tell me about an animal you like?		
10	Can you tell me about a country you want to visit?		

Exercise 8

A, AN, THE, OR Ø

Quiz: Circle the correct article for each sentence.

1. My friend has two daughters.
____ girls want bicycles
for Christmas.
 - a) A
 - b) An
 - c) The**
 - d) Ø
2. Do you want ____ ice
cream cone from the store?
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
3. Jim picked out ____
puppy at the pet shop.
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
4. She bought ____ new jeans.
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
5. Did you see ____
full moon last night?
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
6. There is ____
book on the shelf.
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
7. ____ movie that I saw
yesterday got good reviews.
 - a) A
 - b) An
 - c) The
 - d) Ø
8. See those two shirts?
Mark chose ____ orange
shirt, not the blue one.
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
9. We need ____ paper and
scissors for this project.
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
10. I found ____ ID card
yesterday. The card didn't
have an address on it.
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
11. When she got sick, she
went to ____ hospital.
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø
12. There are ____ apple
trees in our backyard.
 - a) a
 - b) an
 - c) the
 - d) Ø

Answer Key

Exercise 1

- | | | | | |
|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|
| 1. a | 3. a | 5. a | 7. a | 9. a |
| 2. an | 4. a | 6. an | 8. an | 10. an |

Exercise 2

PART A

1. c
2. b
3. a

PART B

1. b
2. c
3. a

PART C

1. a
2. c
3. b

Exercise 3

DIALOGUE A

1. a
2. The
3. a
4. the

DIALOGUE B

1. a
2. The
3. a
4. a

DIALOGUE C

1. a
2. The
3. a
- 4-5. Answers will vary.

Exercise 4

- | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|------|---------|
| 1. the | 3. The | 5. a | 7. a | 9. the |
| 2. a | 4. a | 6. the | 8. a | 10. the |

(Answer: The dress was pink.)

Exercise 5

- | | | | | |
|--------|------|------|------|---------|
| 1. the | 3. a | 5. a | 7. a | 9. an |
| 2. the | 4. Ø | 6. Ø | 8. Ø | 10. the |

Exercise 6

Answers will vary.

Exercise 7

Answers will vary. Monitor your students for correct article usage.

Exercise 8

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. c | 3. a | 5. c | 7. c | 9. d | 11. c |
| 2. b | 4. d | 6. a | 8. c | 10. b | 12. d |

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Color*, *Colorful*, and *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Colour*, *Colourful*, and *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.