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ARTICLES

What is an Article?

An article is a word that precedes a noun/s or noun equivalents. When an article is inserted before any noun, it informs us whether the noun in that sentence or phrase is specific or generic. There are three articles in the English language: a, an, and the, each of which is an important part of the phrase.

Example: After I went to the party, I fell ill.

Here, 'the' specifies the party.

There are two types of Articles such as 1. Definite (The) 2. Indefinite (a, an)

Definite Articles with Names

Generally, we do not use definite articles with names or Proper nouns.

Example of Definite Articles with Names:

The J.K. Rowling wrote the Harry Potter. —WRONG

J.K. Rowling wrote Harry Potter.—CORRECT

EXCEPTION:

However, we do use them in the following cases.

Countries with names that include Kingdom, States, or Republic **Example:** The United States of America. The Republic of India.

Countries with names as Plural Nouns **Example:** The West Indies The Philippines

Geographical Features **Example:** The Mt. Everest The Caspian Sea

Newspaper Names **Example:** The Times of India The Hindu

Well-known things, arts, building, hotels **Example:** The Great Wall of China. The Mona Lisa. The Pan Pacific Hotel

Organizations **Example:** The United Nations Organization The Commonwealth Nations

Families: **Example:** The Oberoi's The Peterson's

Rules for using Articles in English Grammar:

Based on usage of Articles

Rule 1:

Use 'the' before singular and plural nouns, if specifying. Example:

1. The animal is a pet.
2. The animals are taken care of.

In both the cases, irrespective of singular and plural, 'animal' and 'animals' are specific nouns being spoken about.

Rule 2:

Use 'a/an' for unspecified nouns. It doesn't matter in this case. Example:

1. A country is about citizens. (Any country, not specific)
2. An apple is healthy to eat. (Any apple, any color, red or green, not specified)

Exception With these words article 'A/An' is used whenever noun is given: Such /what /how + a/an +Noun
Example:

1. Such a boy
2. What an idea
3. How an opera is made

Rule 3:

'A' is used before a **consonant sound** of the first letter of a word. Example: A boy, A girl, A school. All three words start with the consonant sounds of 'b', 'g', 'sk'

Rule 4:

'An' is used before a **vowel sound** of the first letter of a word. Example: An apple, An umbrella. Both the examples start with the vowel sounds of 'A'. 'Um' of umbrella starts with the sound of 'AM' not 'UM'. 'A' is a vowel. Hence, 'an'.

To get details on Idioms and Phrases, candidates can visit the linked article.

Rule 5:

Use 'A' as an unspecific article before lot of quantity. Example:

1. A lot of people are confined due to quarantine.
2. A couple of citizens were found leaving their country.

Rule 6:

Unspecific articles are used before measurements. Example:

1. Vehicles were found speeding sixty kilometers an hour.
2. A thousand rupee note was found.

Rule 7:

A/An used in exclamations before a singular countable noun. Example:

1. What an intelligent lot of aristocrats!
2. What a pretty beautiful child!

Rule 8:

Definite article 'the' is used to represent the **same subject introduced before.**

Example: A man is an artist.

The man is a painter

Rule 9:

'The' is used when we speak about **rivers, seas, oceans, any legendary objects or any universal objects.**

Example:

1. The Pacific Ocean has sharks in it.
2. The Bay of Bengal is unique in the world.
3. The Arabian Sea is on the western side of the map of India.
4. The map of India is diversified like the country itself.
5. The sun is a star.
6. The earth rotates and revolves.

Rule 10:

Article **before an adjective.** In some cases, an article sometimes modifies a noun that is also modified by an adjective. The usual word order is article + adjective + noun.

1. Sheetal has planned *a big surprise* for her best friend.
2. I read *an interesting blog* yesterday.

Rule 11:

Using Articles with Pronouns. Possessive pronouns like his, my, our, its, her, their, etc., can help identify whether you're talking about specific or nonspecific items. So you don't need a pronoun.

1. Why are you reading his the diary? – WRONG
2. Why are you reading his diary – CORRECT

Zero Article Rule

Articles are not to be placed everywhere. There are certain rules where we place articles. Similarly, there are certain places where we do not use them. The omission of articles is also known as 'The **zero article rule**'.

If it is important to know that where they are used, it is also important to know where they are not. So, let's see the rules of 'Omission of articles'.

Rule 1:

Articles are, generally, **not used with specific names i.e. 'Proper nouns'**.

Example:

A Ram is a good boy.—WRONG

The Ram is a good boy.—WRONG

An Ram is a good boy.—WRONG

Ram is a good boy.—CORRECT('Ram' is a proper noun)

Check out [Subject Verb Agreement](#) here.

Example:

The Mount Mary is a famous and ancient church in Bombay.—WRONG

Mount Mary is a famous and ancient church in Bombay.—CORRECT

Exception Articles can be used with a Proper noun when an adjective defines the proper noun.

Example: "Rohingyas is a name of immigrant community" declared by Amnesty International.

"The immigrant Rohingyas as a community is suffering because of no national identity" declared by Amnesty international.

Rule 2:

Articles **are not to be used before Educational institutions, Places of worship, places of services, and places of treatment, if they serve their primary purpose in the context.**

Example: Sam **goes to school** every day to study. Sam **goes to the school** to attend meetings. School is not the place to attend meetings but to study or teach, hence, no article is placed in the first example.

Example:

Rita's mother **goes to temple** to pray.

Rita's mother **goes to the temple** to meet her friends.

Temple is a place of worship not for meeting people, hence, no article is placed in the first example

Example:

The old man was **admitted to hospital** as he was suffering from influenza.

The old man was **appointed in the hospital** as a child psychologist.

Hospital is a place for treatment not for appointing people.

The primary purpose of the people is to treat or to be treated, hence, no article in the first example before 'hospital'.

Rule 3:

Articles are omitted before plural unspecific nouns.

Example:

Children are innocent. (That means, all children in this world, are innocent)

Parents guide their children. (All parents in this world guide their children)

Rule 4:

Articles are not to be used before designations.

Example: The lady is an Associate professor in Cambridge University.

Some particular idioms and phrases that takes an article “A”

1. In a hurry
2. In a dilemma
3. In a rage
4. In a mood
5. In a temper
6. At a loss