

ARTICLES

What are articles and how do they work within a sentence?

- There are two categories of articles in English:

Definite	Indefinite
the	a or an
" <u>The</u> neighbor's dog barked at me again."	" <u>A</u> neighbor's dog barked at me again."
The speaker is referring to a specific neighbor's dog—one that has probably been mentioned before. <u>The</u> is specific.	The speaker is referring to a dog that could belong to any one of his/her neighbors.

How do we know whether to use 'a' or 'an'?

- When the word begins with a consonant, use **a**. When the word begins with a vowel, use **an**.
 - Ex. We saw **an** armadillo on the side of the road. OR We saw **a** raccoon on the side of the road.

Using Articles:

- At times, using articles may seem complicated when learning English. For example, there are times when you will use a nonspecific/indefinite article (**a** or **an**) when first referring to a noun, followed by a specific/definite article (**the**) when referring back to that noun. Oftentimes in speech and in writing, we may casually refer to something (using **a/an**) and then reference that thing again specifically (using **the**).
 - Ex. "We will follow an itinerary when we go on the trip. The itinerary will keep us on-track."

"Count Nouns" & Articles:

- When using count nouns, you use indefinite and definite articles. Think about whether or not you can put a number on that noun—if you can count it, it's a count noun; for example, "He bought his friend **a** dozen roses." Though "roses" is concrete, it is countable. Collective nouns and some proper nouns are also countable. Uncountable nouns never require an indefinite pronoun, but may sometimes require the use of **the**.

What instances are articles NOT needed?

- Proper nouns referring to cities, streets, individuals, or languages. Ex. Nashville, English (but if you were using "English" to refer to the people from England, you would still employ articles) Names of countries, unless the name is plural. Ex. Sweden, the Republic of China
- The non-count noun referring to a thing in general. Ex. She likes cookies and cream ice cream (which is a reference to that flavor of ice cream). OR She likes the cookies and cream ice cream (which indicates the speaker is referring to a specific brand of cookies and cream ice cream).