

ARTICLE EXPLANATION

ARTICLES : THE (DEFINITE); A, AN (INDEFINITE)

WHEN DO YOU USE AN ARTICLE WITH A NOUN IN ENGLISH?

I. YOU NEVER USE AN ARTICLE WITH A NOUN THAT IS ALREADY MODIFIED BY:

- A. a demonstrative: this, that, these, those
"These camels are tame."
- B. a possessive: John's, my, your, its, etc.
"My car runs well."
- C. an interrogative: which? whose? what?
"Whose garbage is that?"
- D. a limiting adjective: all, another, any, both, each, either, enough, every, much, neither, no, several, some

II. YOU HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO USE AN ARTICLE WITH ANY NOUN NOT MODIFIED BY ONE OF THE FORMS GIVEN ABOVE. YOU DO THIS BY FINDING THE ANSWERS TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. (IF YOU ARE DEALING WITH A PROPER NOUN--THE NAME OF A PERSON, PLACE, ETC.--SEE THE SPECIAL HANDOUT.)

A. IS THE NOUN COUNTABLE OR NON-COUNTABLE?

- 1. A noun is countable if you can put a plural ending on it, and count the items it refers to: one chair, two chairs; one child, two children; etc.
- 2. A noun is non-countable if it lacks a plural form and cannot be counted:
 - a. mass nouns: equipment, water, coffee, oxygen, furniture
 - b. abstract nouns: information, honesty, justice
 - c. names of areas of study: history, art, mathematics, English
 - d. names of sports and recreational activities: baseball, bridge

/If any of these nouns ever go into a plural form-- "arts", "coffees" and so on--they have the special meaning of "types of" ("This school concentrates on the arts: painting, sculpture, and so on") or "servings of" ("Bring back three coffees.") The nouns have then turned into countable nouns and are treated as such. Some nouns can never become countable--see idiom handout./

B. IS THE NOUN SINGULAR OR PLURAL?

If we have more than one item referred to by a countable noun, the noun must take a plural ending (usually -s or -es). It may also have a number before it: "three chickens."

Remember that a non-countable noun that has a plural form has taken on a special meaning and has switched categories. Usually if we want to refer to several items belonging to the class of a non-countable noun we have to say something like "three pieces of equipment", "several items of information", "two pounds of coffee."

Name _____ ARTICLES:
COUNTABLE VS. NONCOUNTABLE NOUNS
"ANOTHER" VS. "MORE"

Another way to test your recognition of countable and noncountable nouns is by trying combinations with *another* and *more*.

Example: 'I want *another* cookie.' – countable-singular
'I want *more* cookies.' – countable-plural
'I want *more* sympathy.' – noncountable

DECIDE WHETHER TO USE "ANOTHER" OR "MORE" IN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES:

1. Did he give _____ assignment in that course after I left?
2. To finish the project, you will need _____ information.
3. The room looks empty; you should put _____ furniture into it.
4. Since I last saw you, I have discovered _____ evidence.
5. When I performed _____ experiments, I reached a different conclusion.
6. Can you find me _____ flower pot?
7. I also want to buy _____ potting soil.
8. I cannot fit _____ plant into this pot.
9. Buy _____ coffee and _____ box of cups; there will be forty people at the party.
10. I don't want _____ advice; I need _____ money.
11. I cannot eat _____ ice cream; I have eaten a quart already.
12. Take me out to dinner; I do not want to see _____ movie!
13. He ate _____ hamburger; that made twelve in all!
14. The World Health Organization reported _____ case of typhus in Copenhagen.
15. There were reports of _____ cases in India.
16. There is _____ typhus in Bangladesh.
17. You cannot put _____ garbage into this can.
18. You must buy _____ cans.
19. I need _____ energy; give me _____ piece of chocolate!
20. She looks tired; she needs _____ sleep.

Name _____

ARTICLES:
DEFINITE VS. INDEFINITE, 2

PUT 'THE', 'A', OR 'AN' INTO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES. (ALL THE NOUNS ARE SINGULAR, COUNTABLE NOUNS.) THIS TIME ALL THE CATEGORIES IN SECTION II.C OF THE HANDOUT HAVE BEEN MINGLED.

1. Do you usually eat _____ egg for breakfast?
2. Did the travel agent make _____ reservation for you on _____ next plane to Chicago?
3. Have you studied _____ lesson for today?
4. Did you read _____ book that I recommended to you?
5. Tonight _____ planet Venus is very close to _____ moon.
6. There is _____ oscilloscope in _____ workshop.
7. To do that job, he will need _____ lathe.
8. I must have _____ extra key made for _____ front door.

/The next group of sentences go together./

9. This morning I received _____ long letter from my mother.
10. _____ letter brought me the news of my grandfather's remarriage.
11. _____ wedding was last Thursday.
12. After _____ ceremony, my parents gave _____ huge party.
13. _____ party went on until noon of _____ next day.
14. _____ bride danced all night.
15. She is _____ energetic woman, much younger than my grandfather.
16. _____ woman of seventy can naturally outdance _____ man of ninety.

/The next group of sentences go together./

17. Shall we eat lunch in _____ department office today?
18. There is _____ coffeemaker there, and _____ big table.
19. No, let's eat in _____ department's student lounge.
20. _____ couch in there is much more comfortable than _____ hard chairs in _____ office.

ARTICLES

Exercise 6

Fill the blanks with 'THE', 'A', 'AN', or 'SOME'. If an article is not needed, leave the space blank.

1. _____ first true electric battery, called _____ voltaic pile, was invented by Alessandro Volta in 1800. Until then, _____ Leyden Jar with its generator had been _____ only worthwhile source for _____ electricity. With _____ Volta's discovery, science of storing _____ electrical current took _____ great step forward. In _____ early days of electrical science, _____ primary batteries were _____ main source for _____ direct current. From 1800 to _____ early part of _____ 20th century, _____ wet batteries were used. _____ dry cell has replaced _____ wet type, which used _____ sal ammoniac as _____ electrolyte. _____ copper oxide caustic soda cell is still in _____ use for _____ heavy duty service.

2. Through _____ miraculous nature of _____ water, _____ reservoir of _____ water seeks its own level. _____ well newly dug is _____ empty chamber, _____ deep pit in which _____ walls change from _____ top soil to _____ clay as it deepens. _____ beads of water soon form on _____ sides, like _____ sparkling diamonds studding _____ walls. First _____ one drop of water, then another, until hundreds stand out all around. They begin to trickle slowly down to _____ spot where _____ droplet first started out. With _____ addition of other droplets, together they form _____ small stream. Soon there are _____ many little streams which slowly merge, decreasing in _____ number and increasing in size. These streams continue to grow and become _____ main channels of water supply, forming _____ deep pool of _____ clear, cool water at _____ bottom of _____ well.