

When to Use Definite vs. Indefinite Articles

a, an, the

Question	Answer
What is an article?	It is a special adjective that refers to a noun, (subject, place or thing). It lets everyone know if the noun is specific to the sentence or not.
What are the several types of articles?	<p>We have only three articles <i>a</i>, <i>an</i>, <i>the</i>. <i>A</i> and <i>an</i> are indefinite articles ,refers to the nouns more generally and used only with singular countable nouns. You might say, “I need a pen,” or “I want an orange.” In both cases, you aren’t referring to a specific pen or orange. The indefinite articles communicate the fact that you’d accept any pen or orange.</p> <p>On the other hand, the definite article <i>the</i>, refers to a specific noun. If you were to say, “I want the orange” instead of “an orange,” you’d be talking about one specific orange. If you requested “the pencil” instead of “a pencil,” you’d be asking for one particular pencil. The can be used</p>
Exceptions	Mass nouns are any nouns that can’t be counted. This makes them neither singular nor plural. Liquids are a great example of mass nouns. You’d still use the article <i>the</i> for specific mass nouns, but for non-specific ones, you wouldn’t use an article at all.

Question	Answer
	<p data-bbox="824 233 997 268">For example:</p> <ul data-bbox="841 323 1214 401" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="841 323 1214 359">• The water is on the floor.<li data-bbox="841 365 1214 401">• Water is on the floor.
Strategies	<p data-bbox="824 485 1382 636">Use <i>a</i> before a singular consonant and countable word .Use <i>an</i> before a singular , countable and vowel word. Use <i>the</i> before known words plural or singular</p>
Why learn about articles?	<p data-bbox="824 642 1328 751">Articles specify if the noun is known or unknown to the reader. It makes the sentence more clear.</p>
How can I know that this tool has been successfully used?	<p data-bbox="824 758 1398 869">I look for the nouns and check if it is clear to me that I am talking about singular or plural nouns.</p>