

More about the definite article

- Use *the* with these common locations, especially after the prepositions *at* and *to*: *the office, the factory, the store, the mall, the gym, the library, the park, the pool, the post office, the bank*.
*I'd like to have exercise equipment **at the office**. I never have time to go **to the gym**. Some companies install ATMs so that employees don't have to go **to the bank**.*
- Don't use *the* with these common locations, especially after the prepositions *at*, *to*, *in*, *before*, and *after*: *home, bed, work, school, college, class, prison, jail*.
*I arrive **at work** early so that I can leave early to pick up my children **after school**. Some companies offer special training programs for people who have been **in prison**. Many employees work during the day and go **to college** at night.*
- Don't use *the* before meals. You can use an article when you describe a particular meal.
*I had **breakfast** late, so I didn't eat much for **lunch**. The **lunch** we had at that new café wasn't very good. It was **an expensive lunch**, too.*

Common errors

*It was late, so I went **to bed** (NOT . . . so I went **to the bed**.)
She couldn't go **to work** because she was sick. (NOT She couldn't **go to the work** . . .)*

On A Complete these conversations with *the, a, an*, or *(-)* if no word is necessary.

- A Around what time do you go to _____ bed at night?
B Oh, I'm always in _____ bed by 10:00, because I have to be at _____ factory at 8.
- A Did you have _____ breakfast this morning?
B Yes, but I'm having _____ light lunch, because I'm going out for _____ expensive dinner.
- A Have you ever wanted to take a nap after _____ big lunch?
B Occasionally I'll do that at _____ home, but there's no place to sleep at _____ work.
- A Do you do anything regularly for exercise, like go to _____ gym?
B Well, sometimes I go for a run in _____ park, and every so often I go to _____ pool for a swim.
- A Have you ever taken a pet with you to _____ work or to _____ school?
B Actually, when I was in _____ college, a guy used to bring a pet rat to _____ class. The teacher never knew.
- A Do you go straight home after _____ work?
B Well, it seems like I always have something to do, like stop at _____ store to pick up something for _____ dinner or go to _____ bank for some cash.
- A Do you ever do anything fun after _____ class, like go to a restaurant?
B Um, sometimes I go out for _____ dinner with some classmates.
- A Would you like to have flexible hours at _____ office?
B Yeah, I'd like to be able to pick up my kids after _____ school.