



12 Form, Meaning and Function

The Definite Article: *the*

The definite article *the* comes before singular and plural nouns: **the** car, **the** cars.

Use *the* for specific objects or people that were introduced before or that are known.

Do not use *the* with plural or noncount nouns when talking in general.

He is a tourist. **The** tourist is in Jeddah.

What are **the** official languages of Canada?

Technology is used in classrooms.

Use *the* with the superlative.

Planes are **the** fastest means of transport.

Use *the* for objects that are one of a kind.

the Earth **the** sun **the** moon
the stars **the** sky **the** sea

Use *the* with the names of oceans, seas, rivers, mountain ranges, deserts, groups of states, and monuments.

the Red Sea **the** Amazon **the** Eiffel Tower **the** National Museum
the Arabian Desert **the** Alps **the** United States **the** Pacific Ocean

Do not use *the* with proper names, possessive adjectives, months, days of the week, meals, games, sports, or with the words *home*, *school*, *work*, *business*, and *vacation* when used for their purpose.

Fahd is my brother. He is in Dubai on business. Let's play tennis after lunch.



A. Write the definite article **the** where necessary.

1. When ____ sun goes down at ____ night, you can see ____ moon and ____ stars.
2. ____ Burj Khalifa in ____ Dubai is ____ tallest building in ____ world.
3. ____ Great Pyramid of ____ Giza is one of ____ Seven Wonders of ____ Ancient World.
4. ____ Calligraphers used ____ Kufic script to write ____ first copies of ____ Holy Qur'an.
5. ____ Last year we went on ____ vacation to ____ island of ____ Penang in ____ Malaysia.

B. Write the article **a**, **an**, or **the** where necessary.

1. ____ bullet train can travel at ____ speed of 300 km ____ hour. It isn't as fast as ____ airplane, but ____ trip on ____ express train can take ____ shorter time.
2. We usually play ____ football in ____ park on ____ Saturday morning. In ____ afternoon, we go for ____ lunch at ____ our favorite restaurant by ____ beach.
3. What makes ____ Jeddah ____ global city and one of ____ best places to live in ____ Middle East? Is it ____ quality of ____ life?
4. ____ Cambridge is surrounded by ____ green areas; ____ quarter of ____ population cycles around ____ town, through ____ parks, and along ____ narrow streets.
5. ____ coral reefs in ____ Red Sea are ____ popular destination for ____ scuba divers.