

JRR Tolkien was a professor at Oxford University. He wrote a children's book called *The Hobbit* in 1937. Since then, the book has been translated into more than 30 languages and sold millions of copies worldwide. The book begins at the home of a hobbit called Bilbo Baggins ...

Chapter 1

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit.



Presentation

Indefinite article a/an

Use the indefinite article *a/an*:

- to talk about one person or one thing in a general way (when it doesn't matter which one):
She lived in a house in Manchester.
- to talk about something or someone for the first time (we don't know which one):
In a hole in the ground ...
- to say that a person or thing is one of many:
He was a professor at Oxford University. (There is more than one professor.)

Definite article the

Use the definite article *the*:

- to talk about a specific person or thing:
JRR Tolkien was the author of The Hobbit.
- to add a description of the specific thing or person:
The hole had a round door.
- to refer back to the same thing or person:

The hole had a round door. The door opened on to a hall.

- to say that a person or thing is the only one in that context:

Tom was waiting by the entrance to the museum. (there is only one entrance)

Zero article

Use no article to talk about:

- uncountable or plural nouns in a general way:
The hobbit was fond of visitors.
Houses in England often have gardens.

some

Note that *some* isn't an article but it can replace *a/an* or *zero article* when you talk about plural countable nouns, or uncountable nouns.

There's a chair in the hall. → There are some chairs in the hall.

There's furniture in the hall. → There's some furniture in the hall.

We often use *some* to say *a number of ...* rather than talking about people/things in general:

I like books about fantasy. (= all books)

I like some books about fantasy. (= a number of books, but not all)

Exercises

- 1 Read the text. One of the options in italics (1–6) is not possible. Circle the incorrect option.



Last weekend we visited ¹*a / the / ⊖* castle near my home. It has ²*an / some / –* ancient statues at the entrance. The main door opens on to ³*an / some / the* entrance hall and the first painting you see is a portrait of ⁴*a / – / the* previous owner. All the rooms have ⁵*a / some / –* beautiful furniture. The disappointing thing was that I wanted ⁶*– / an / some* information about its history but no one there seemed to know anything about it.

- 2 Read this description of a room from a play called *A Doll's House*. Complete it using *a*, *an* or *the*. Then listen and check.

ACT I Scene 1

The audience sees ¹..... comfortable room. At the back of ²..... stage, there are two doors. There is ³..... piano between ⁴..... two doors. One door leads to ⁵..... entrance-hall and ⁶..... other door, which is partly open, leads to a study. We can see part of a desk in ⁷..... study. On the left-hand wall of the main room, there is ⁸..... window and there are two armchairs near it. On the right-hand side, there is another window and, in front of it, ⁹..... stove and ¹⁰..... rocking-chair. There's ¹¹..... small table between ¹²..... stove and ¹³..... rocking-chair. There are pictures on ¹⁴..... walls and a small bookcase with some books. A fire burns in ¹⁵..... stove.

- 3 Read the sets of three sentences. Write one indefinite article, one definite article and one zero article (–) in A, B and C.

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|---|---|
| 1 A Henrik Ibsen was author of the play <i>A Doll's House</i> . | B Here are your keys. room is on the second floor. |
| B Henrik Ibsen was playwright from Norway. | C Do you have room for two, please? |
| C Henrik wrote plays in the 19th century. | 4 A They live in house in the centre of Rome. |
| 2 A I like watching comedy shows on TV. | B Some people still live in houses made of straw. |
| B There's episode of that new TV show on this evening. | C They live in same house that Shakespeare once lived in. |
| C Have you seen new detective show on Channel 5? It's great! | 5 A Would you like piece of chocolate? |
| 3 A We have accommodation for 30 guests. | B In my opinion chocolate they make in Mexico is the best in the world. |
| | C I'm very fond of chocolate. |