

## a (indefinite article)

Form

## Use

singular countable nouns (not specific)

## Example

I need to get **a** new coat.

## an (indefinite article)

Form

## Use

instead of a when the next word begins with a vowel sound

## Example

I don't have enough money for **an** expensive dress.

## Watch out!

Whether we use a or an with a word depends on the sound, not the spelling. Be careful with the following words and phrases.

- an honest person
- an hour
- a euro
- a uniform

## the (definite article)

Form

## Use

singular countable nouns (specific)

plural countable nouns (specific)

uncountable nouns (specific)

## Example

Let's go to **the** new shopping centre.Where are **the** books I ordered?I gave the shop assistant **the** money and then left.

## No article (zero article)

Form

## Use

plural countable nouns (general)

uncountable nouns (general)

## Example

Prices have gone up a lot recently.

Fresh fruit is really good for you.

## Special rules

Form

## Use

## Example

places

**the:** seas (**the** Atlantic), rivers (**the** Amazon), areas (**the** Antarctic), some countries (**the** USA, **the** UK), public buildings (**the** theatre), **the** Earth, **the** world, **the** sky, **the** moon, **the** sun, **the** sea, **the** environment

**no article:** towns and cities (Moscow), most countries (France), continents (Europe), streets (Baker Street), planets (Mars)

activities

**a/an:** have **a** job, work as **a** ...

**the:** on **the** radio, **the** media, play **the** piano

**no article:** go to work, on TV, go shopping, play tennis, listen to music, go to work, go to school, be at school, be at university, school subjects (maths)

time

**the:** in **the** morning/afternoon/evening, on **the** 20<sup>th</sup> March, in **the** 1950s

**no article:** days (Thursday), months (May), years (2009), at night

people

**the:** **the** King, **the** Prime Minister, **the** army, **the** navy, **the** police, **the** Germans, **the** English

**no article:** become king, he's English, speak English

**A** Complete using *a*, *an* or *the*.

- 1 We had ..... really good science lesson at school today.
- 2 I found ..... unusual insect on the wall outside our house.
- 3 It's your birthday next week. Are you going to have ..... party?
- 4 We waited for hours, but we finally saw ..... Queen.
- 5 Why don't we listen to ..... radio?
- 6 Have you got ..... euro I could borrow?
- 7 Mum has gone to ..... bank, but she'll be back soon.
- 8 Where have you been? I've been waiting for over ..... hour!

**B** Write an article in each gap where necessary. If an article is not necessary, put a dash (-).

I had (1) .....  
 really bad day on (2) ..... Tuesday.  
 I bought (3) ..... new game on CD-ROM for my computer,  
 but (4) ..... game didn't work properly. I took it back to  
 (5) ..... shop on (6) ..... North Street, but  
 (7) ..... manager blamed me! He pointed to  
 (8) ..... scratch on (9) ..... CD-ROM  
 and said I'd done it. I couldn't believe it! I had  
 to buy (10) ..... new one!

**C** Circle the extra word in each sentence.

- 1 Do you think we will ever send a person to the Mars?
- 2 When you go to the London, don't forget to see the London Eye.
- 3 When we use the cars, we damage the environment.
- 4 I'm not telling a lies! It's the truth.
- 5 I'm looking for a teacher who can teach me the German.
- 6 Ray needs a warm hat and a new coat for his visit to the Russia.
- 7 Dad has gone to a work and forgotten the car keys.
- 8 Some people have an unusual pets, such as lions or tigers.