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## ENGLISH GRAMMAR PRACTICE

# THE NOUN

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. THE ARTICLE</b>	Types of Adverbs .....p. 87
The Indefinite Article: a/an .....p. 4	Round-up test .....p. 97
The Definite Article: the .....p. 4	
Round-up test .....p. 13	<b>VII. THE PRONOUN</b> .....p. 98
<b>II. THE NOUN</b> .....p. 14	Personal Pronouns .....p. 98
The Plural of Nouns .....p. 19	Possessive Adjectives and Pronouns .....p. 104
Irregular Plurals .....p. 19	Demonstrative Adjectives and Pronouns .....p. 111
The Gender of Nouns.....p. 24	Relative Pronouns.....p. 117
Quantifiers .....p. 28	Reflexive and Empathic Pronouns
Round-up test .....p. 37	Reciprocal Pronouns .....p. 126
<b>III. THE POSSESSIVE/GENITIVE CASE</b> .....p. 38	Round-up test.....p. 131
The OF Possessive .....p. 44	<b>VIII. WH QUESTIONS</b> .....p. 132
Round-up test .....p. 46	Round-up test.....p. 138
<b>IV. SOME, ANY, NO</b> .....p. 47	<b>IX. NUMBERS</b> .....p. 139
Some/Any/No Compounds .....p. 51	Round-up test.....p. 144
Round-up test.....p. 55	<b>X. PREPOSITIONS</b> .....p. 145
<b>V. THE ADJECTIVE</b> .....p. 56	Round-up test.....p. 153
Comparatives .....p. 60	<b>XI. LINKING DEVICES</b> .....p. 155
Superlatives .....p. 67	Round-up test.....p. 160
Nationalities .....p. 74	<b>XII. WORD FORMATION</b> .....p. 162
ED/-ING Adjectives .....p. 77	<b>FINAL REVISION</b> .....p. 165
Order of Adjectives .....p. 82	<b>ANSWER KEY</b> .....p. 174
Round-up test .....p. 85	
<b>VI. THE ADVERB</b> .....p. 87	
The Formation of Adverbs .....p. 87	



# I. The Article

## The Indefinite Article: a/an

- We use **a** before a consonant sound – *a boy, a car, a plant, a tree, a new bike*
- We use **an** before a vowel sound (a, e, i, o, u) – *an address, an egg, an idea, an old clock, an umbrella*
- We choose **a** or **an** based on the way we pronounce the words and not on the way we write them.

*E.g. a head/an hour, an uncle/a university, an egg/a European committee*

We use **a/an** to refer to:

→ General descriptions: *A postman is a person who delivers letters.*

*An elephant is an animal which lives in herds.*

→ Jobs: *Jake is an engineer. Maggie is a nurse.*

→ Exclamations: *What a wonderful day! What a brilliant idea!*

## The Definite Article: the

- Before a consonant we pronounce **the** [ð] – *the park*
- Before a vowel we pronounce **the** [ði] – *the union*
- **The** is used both for singular and plural nouns – *the reader/the readers*
- We use **the** to refer to:

→ something which is known to the participants in the conversation: *"Where's the bathroom?" "It's on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor."*

→ something which has already been mentioned: *A boy and a girl fell in love. The boy and the girl got married two years later.*

→ things we consider unique: *the sun, the moon, the earth, the sky*

→ groups of people: *the rich, the poor, the old, the disabled*

→ nationalities: *the Japanese, the British, the Swiss*

→ superlatives and ordinal numbers: *the best, the most beautiful, the first, the third*

→ collective nouns: *the police, the government, the army, the fire brigade*

→ musical instruments: *to play the violin/the guitar/the saxophone*

→ geographical features: *rivers – the Danube, the Mississippi, oceans – the Atlantic, the Pacific, seas – the North Sea, the Mediterranean, deserts – the Sahara, the Gobi, mountain ranges – the Himalayas, the Alps, large areas – the Middle East, the West, plural names – the United States, the Netherlands*

→ buildings: *the Taj Mahal, the British Museum, The Odeon Theatre, The Eiffel Tower, The Heathrow Airport (but Bran Castle, Big Ben)*

→ common expressions:

1. the same – *They are the same.*

2. go to the countryside/the sea/the mountains – *I want to go to the mountains.*

3. on the left/right – *The bank is on the left.*

4. at the top/bottom/end/back of – *Write your name at the bottom of the page.*

5. in the middle – *The table is in the middle of the dining room.*

6. go to the cinema/the theatre – *We went to the theatre last week.*

7. on the radio (but on TV) – *I heard the latest news on the radio.*

A/An	The
<p>– used to refer to non-specific nouns  <i>Let's read a book!</i> (any book)  <i>Can you open a window?</i> (there is more than one window)  <i>Prague is an interesting city.</i> (there are other interesting cities as well)  <i>Is there a restaurant nearby?</i> (there are many restaurants)</p>	<p>– used to refer to specific nouns  <i>Let's read the book!</i> (a specific book)  <i>Can you open the window?</i> (there is only one window)  <i>Prague is the capital of the Czech Republic.</i> (there is only one capital of the Czech Republic)  <i>The restaurant was very expensive.</i> (the restaurant we went to)</p>

He met a woman in San Francisco. The woman was a journalist.  
 She bought a scarf. The scarf is very colourful.  
 They saw a dog. The dog was very playful.

## The Zero Article

We use no article when we refer to:

- **general ideas:** Babies cry a lot. Computers help us in our work. Love is all around us.
- **languages:** I don't speak Japanese.  
 Do you understand Italian?
- **school subjects:** I don't like Geography.
- **meals** (breakfast, lunch, dinner): What time do you have breakfast?
- **next/last week/month/year/summer/Friday**
- **days, months, holidays:** on Saturday, in June, at Christmas
- **common expressions with work, school, university, college, prison, hospital, church, bed, class, home:**  
 by car/train/plane/bus/tram, on foot, on holiday
- **names of cities, streets, airports:** Paris is the city of lovers.  
 How can I get to 10 Downing Street? They're flying from Heathrow.
- **countries:** I visited Denmark two years ago.
- **individual mountains, lakes:** Mount Everest is the highest in the world.  
 She lives near lake Ontario.



## 1. Use the correct article A or AN:

- |                  |                    |                       |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. _____ can     | 8. _____ alligator | 15. _____ house       |
| 2. _____ ostrich | 9. _____ ice cream | 16. _____ insect      |
| 3. _____ slipper | 10. _____ umbrella | 17. _____ elephant    |
| 4. _____ apple   | 11. _____ car      | 18. _____ cherry      |
| 5. _____ bike    | 12. _____ parrot   | 19. _____ alarm clock |
| 6. _____ dog     | 13. _____ orange   | 20. _____ hour        |
| 7. _____ train   | 14. _____ man      |                       |

## 2. Add the adjectives to the following nouns and make the necessary changes:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. a watch (expensive) – <i>an expensive watch</i> | 11. a man (angry) – _____           |
| 2. a baby (noisy) – _____                          | 12. a question (tricky) – _____     |
| 3. a bag (orange) – _____                          | 13. a film (American) – _____       |
| 4. a house (modern) – _____                        | 14. a jumper (yellow) – _____       |
| 5. a trip (exciting) – _____                       | 15. an address (long) – _____       |
| 6. a story (horrible) – _____                      | 16. a woman (old) – _____           |
| 7. a song (Italian) – _____                        | 17. a show (interesting) – _____    |
| 8. an umbrella (new) – _____                       | 18. a child (unhappy) – _____       |
| 9. a duckling (ugly) – _____                       | 19. a train (early) – _____         |
| 10. a task (easy) – _____                          | 20. an exercise (difficult) – _____ |

## 3. What are these people's jobs? Use the words below:

doctor, postman, scientist, bus driver, actress, engineer, plumber, singer, ~~artist~~, pilot

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. He paints landscapes.<br>_____ <i>He's an artist.</i> | 6. She sings in a chorus.<br>_____       |
| 2. She works in a lab.<br>_____                          | 7. He looks after ill people.<br>_____   |
| 3. He delivers letters.<br>_____                         | 8. He flies an airplane.<br>_____        |
| 4. He builds bridges and roads.<br>_____                 | 9. She acts in plays and films.<br>_____ |
| 5. He mends pipes.<br>_____                              | 10. He drives buses.<br>_____            |

## 4. Fill in the gaps with A or AN:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. I always see <u>an</u> old man by the bridge.    | 4. Those parents have _____ obedient son.    |
| 2. He often offers his wife _____ beautiful flower. | 5. There was _____ difficult question at the |
| 3. They made me _____ pleasant surprise.            | Geography test.                              |

6. He met \_\_\_\_\_ pretty girl at the theatre.

7. She comes from \_\_\_\_\_ large family.

8. We played \_\_\_\_\_ amazing game at the beach.

9. They saw \_\_\_\_\_ attractive woman at the mall.

10. There is \_\_\_\_\_ gorgeous scenery close to the river.

## 5. Complete each definition with a suitable word below, using the correct article.

electrical guitar, bottle, hammer, gym, ~~bus~~, restaurant, suitcase, umbrella

1. \_\_\_\_\_ *A bus* is a vehicle in which people are driven from one place to another.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ is a musical instrument often used in playing rock music.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ is a place where meals are prepared and served to customers.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ is a container in which wine, water or other liquids are kept.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ is a tool used for hitting different objects.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ is a club where people go to exercise and keep fit.

7. \_\_\_\_\_ is a large container where you carry your possessions while travelling.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ is an object that protects you from the rain.

## 6. Pronounce the following words:

1. the university

5. the office

9. the one

13. the angry driver

2. the European Union

6. the police station

10. the telephone

14. the orange juice

3. the engineer

7. the envelope

11. the soup

15. the uniform

4. the tram

8. the Austrians

12. the handkerchief

16. the test

## 7. Insert THE where necessary and rewrite the sentences:

1. *They found a treasure on bottom of ocean.*

*They found a treasure on the bottom of the ocean.*

2. *We often spend our summer holiday in mountains.*

7. *Lola plays piano very beautifully.*

3. *They read about event in newspaper.*

8. *The car stopped in middle of road.*

4. *My sister and I like surfing Internet.*

9. *She received most romantic love letter ever.*

5. *His family live on second floor.*

10. *Where's nearest post office?*

6. *Go straight ahead and you will see cinema on right.*

11. *We must protect environment.*



12. They often take their kids to park on Saturday.

14. We talked to teacher at same time.

13. Jerry wants to go on a trip to Greece at end of August.

## 8. What do you call the people of these countries?

Country	One person (in particular)	People (in general)
1. the USA	the American	Americans
2. Italy		
3. France		
4. Japan		
5. England		
6. Mexico		
7. Spain		
8. Canada		
9. Russia		
10. Thailand		

## 9. Fill in the blanks using the words below and the definite article THE:

shelf, police, army, nature, ~~Earth~~, sky, president, lake, young, poor

1. *The Earth* moves around the Sun.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ are the future of our nation.
3. He found the book on top of \_\_\_\_\_.
4. They went on a boat ride on \_\_\_\_\_.
5. She saw an interesting documentary on \_\_\_\_\_ channel.
6. If you witness a robbery you should call \_\_\_\_\_.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ spoke to the people in the square.
8. His grandfather joined \_\_\_\_\_ and fought in World War II.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ can't afford expensive holidays.
10. After the rain there was a rainbow up in \_\_\_\_\_.

## 10. Fill in the blanks with THE where necessary. Put a cross (X) if no article is needed.

1. Jane has just returned from the States.
2. Who is \_\_\_\_\_ manager of this company?
3. We are spending our holiday in \_\_\_\_\_ Philippines this summer.
4. It's fun travelling by \_\_\_\_\_ plane.
5. Few people have been to \_\_\_\_\_ Himalayas.
6. They stayed at \_\_\_\_\_ Intercontinental Hotel in Bucharest.