

## ENGLISH POCKET GRAMMAR

- ediție revizuită -

### Respect pentru oameni și cărți

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## The Article

*The article is an inflexible part of speech which determines the noun. The article cannot be used alone. There are three articles in English: the definite article (**the**), the indefinite article (**a/an**) and the zero article.*

### 1. The definite article: **the**

**The definite article is used:**

1. to refer again to something which has already been mentioned:

*Take a pencil. Put **the pencil** in your pencil case.*

*Give me a bottle of water. **The bottle** is in the fridge.*

*I spoke to a child. **The child** was playing in front of my house.*

2. with plural states and countries:

*They went to **the Netherlands**.*

*I went on a trip in **the United Kingdom** last year.*

***The USA.** is a very large country.*

3. with mountain ranges, oceans, seas and rivers:

*We saw **the Himalayas** from the plane.*

*They live near **the Pacific** Ocean.*

***The Mississippi** river is not as long as **the Nile** river.*



4. with names of hotels, cinemas, opera houses, theatres, museums and institutions:

*The **Intercontinental Hotel** is very famous in Bucharest.*

*The film we saw at **the Movieplex cinema** last night was very good.*

*We met her at **the Metropolitan Opera**.*

*He saw a good play at **the Nottara Theatre**.*

*Last week they visited **the Art Museum**.*

*He applied for a job at **the University of Florida**.*

*I'd like to visit **the White House** one day.*

5. with parts of the day:

*She arrived in **the morning**.*

*We had to be at home in **the afternoon**.*

*He usually goes for a walk in **the evening**.*

6. with superlatives and ordinal numbers:

*It's one of **the best** places I've ever been to.*

***The tallest** student in our class is John.*

*Jane is **the prettiest** girl in their group.*

*I arrived **the first** at the top of the mountain.*

***The second thing** I want to do today is to phone Mary.*

***The last time** I saw him was in June 2010.*

7. when we talk about a unique person or thing:

***The president** had a press conference.*

***The Earth** moves round **the Sun**.*

or before plural names (surnames, i.e.: *the Browns*, *the*

Tudors, the Smiths) to refer to a group as a whole:

***The Browns** are not at home today.*

***The Tudors** (= the dynasty) ruled for many years.*

***The Smiths** like tea.*

8. with musical instruments:

*He plays **the piano**.*

*She likes listening to **the flute**.*

*He plays **the drums** in our band.*

9. with names of publications:

*I read **the Guardian** every day.*

***The Times** is well known throughout England.*

10. with singular nouns to indicate a class of things or animals:

***The elephant** is a big animal.*

***The white whale** is rather extinct today.*

***The tortoise** is very slow.*

11. with nouns followed by a prepositional phrase:

***The capital** of Romania is Bucharest.*

***The house** with big gates is our grandparents'.*

*That street leads to **the centre** of the town.*

12. with a common noun that is followed by a proper noun, which identifies it:

***The novelist Rebreanu** wrote "Pădurea Spânzuraților".*

***The play "Romeo and Juliet"** always makes me cry.*

***The poet Eminescu** wrote a lot of romantic poems.*

13. with names of ships, trains, aeroplanes:

*Respect* **The Titanic** was a huge luxury ship.

**The TGV** is faster than any other train in France.

**The British Airways** can bring you safely home.

14. with names of people, to draw attention to a certain individual:

**The Nicholas** I was talking to that day is not Mary's boyfriend.

**The Tom** I lent my dictionary to does not live in my town.

**The Jane** you like so much is my neighbour.

15. with adjectives, gerunds and past participles, which are used to represent a whole class (*the rich, the poor, the dead, the missing*):

**The rich** are usually selfish.

He likes to help **the poor**.

We must always remember **the dead** in our prayers.

**The missing** won't be allowed to board the plane.

16. with names of days, months and seasons that have a special meaning to the speaker, or when they are preceded by the prepositions **during** or **in**:

Don't tell me about **the Monday** we left for Austria!

**The summer** of 2010 was very hot.

She thinks she lost his address in **the February** of 1990.

They hitchhiked many times during **the spring** of that year.

Libris

17. with historical epochs or documents:

**The Stone Age** was very important for mankind's development.

**The French Revolution** brought many changes in Europe.

**The Middle Ages** was a very difficult social period.

Every citizen must know his rights in **the Constitution**.

## II. The indefinite article: *a/an*

**"a"** is used when the noun begins with a consonant sound: **a** table, **a** book, **a** girl, **a** horse, **a** pelican.

**Note:** **"a"** is used before **"u"** when we pronounce it with a **"y"** sound: **a** uniform BUT **an** umbrella.

**"an"** is used when the noun begins with a vowel sound (**a, e, i, o, u**): **an** airplane, **an** owl, **an** idea, **an** onion, **an** octopus, **an** umbrella.

**Note:** **"an"** is used before **"h"** when it is silent: **an** hour BUT **a** horse.

## The indefinite article is used:

1. when a noun is mentioned for the first time:

You can get **an apple** if you want.

Send me **a postcard** when you are abroad.

Tell him **a lie**, if you dare!

2. with jobs:

Tom is **a teacher**.

Sally is **a lawyer**.

Nick is **a mechanic**.



3. in exclamatory sentences beginning with **what** or **such**:

**What a good movie!**

**What a night!**

*His words gave me **such a** scare!*

4. in expressions of ratio (price, speed, frequency):

*How much is it? **Six pence a** box.*

*This car can go at **a speed of sixty miles a** hour.*

*I usually drink coffee **twice a** day.*

5. with certain numbers and expressions of quantity:

**A dozen** eggs costs 50 p.

*He bought **a hundred** pencils yesterday.*

*She asked me **a thousand** times to go to her birthday party.*

*There are **a lot of** glasses on that table.*

*There is **a little** bread left in the cupboard.*

*There are **a few** oranges on the plate.*

6. when we want to emphasize that a person is unknown to the speaker:

**A Mr Green** asked about you a few moments ago.

**A Mrs Brown** is on the phone now.

**A Miss Greenfield** wants to see you right away.

7. after the verbs **be** and **become** when the noun has indefinite reference:

*It's **an English** book.*

*It was **a German** car.*

*It's **an American** cowboy hat.*

8. with an apposition:

Sarah, **a friend of mine**, paid me a visit yesterday.

Mr Jones, **a neighbour**, called the police.

Johnson, **a carpenter** by trade, offered to help us.

9. in prepositional phrases (as a reward, all of a sudden, with a view to, it's a pity, it's a shame, to keep a secret, in a hurry, to have an opportunity, to have a headache, etc.)

He received \$1,000 **as a reward**.

**All of a sudden**, she woke up.

He called the waiter **in a low voice**.

I want a room **with a view to** the sea.

**It's a pity** he couldn't come.

**It's a shame** she behaved like that.

John isn't able to keep a secret.

I'm no longer **in a hurry**, I've got my own car.

He had **an opportunity** to become mayor, but he declined.

She stayed at home, as she was **having a terrible headache**.

He couldn't come because he **had a pain** in his leg.

Sally was eager **to put an end** to her relationship with Victor.

Steve **made a fortune** from his shop.

He tiptoed out of the room in order not **to make a noise**.

Sarah **made a big fuss** when her boyfriend went to watch the game alone.

She **took a great interest in** learning foreign languages.