



Definite and Indefinite Articles

Indefinite Articles *a* and *an*:

An indefinite article is when the word “**a**” or “**an**” is used to introduce an unspecified noun or the name of a general category.

The indefinite article **a** is used before consonant sounds (including “y” sounds):

- I need to buy **a** car.
- After graduation, my goal is to become **a** nurse.
- My sister is **a** vegetarian.
- I will transfer to **a** university.

The indefinite article “**an**” is used before vowel sounds (including nouns starting with a silent “h”):

- Julie is **an** engineer.
- I share **an** apartment with my best friend.
- Jacob arrived **an** hour early to his interview.
- I ate **an** apple for lunch.

When nouns are modified by an adjective, use **a** or **an** depending on the sound of the adjective immediately following the article.

- I am **an** only child.
- She works as **an** independent contractor.
- We slept in **an** old tent.

Definite article *the*:

The definite article “**the**” is used when talking about a specific or particular object that both speaker and listener know.

- **The** bus is down the street.
- **The** mayor is running for re-election.

When mentioning a person or object for the first time use **a** or **an**, then use **the** when repeating that object.

- We watched **a** new tv show. **The** show was very entertaining.
- My neighbor adopted **a** new dog. Unfortunately, **the** dog likes to bite people.