

P1-P2 English

冠詞：不定冠詞(a / an)、定冠詞(the)、零冠詞

Articles: Indefinite Articles (a / an); Definite Article (the); Zero Article

1. Articles (冠詞)

■ Articles 冠詞

- The words “a”, “an” and “the”.
- They are used before a noun and to define whether the noun is specific or unspecific.

■ Indefinite articles 不定冠詞: a / an

- To describe unspecific person or thing.
- They are used before a countable and singular noun.

■ Definite article 定冠詞: the

- To describe specific person (or people) or thing (or things).
- It can be used before a countable or uncountable noun.

■ Zero article 零冠詞

- A noun is not preceded by an article (i.e., a, an, or the).

2. Indefinite articles: a / an

■ Indefinite articles 不定冠詞: a / an

- To describe unspecific person or thing.
- They are used before a countable and singular noun.
- Rules:

- “a” and “an” share the same meaning



- “a” is used before words starting in consonant sounds and “an” is used before words starting with vowel sounds (corresponding letters: A E I O U, but pay attention to the highlighted words below)

□ **Examples:**

- a woman, a student, a flower, a cat, a university, a union, a European country
- an apple, an eraser, an ant, an envelope, an old lady, an English book, an hour, an umbrella, an honest girl

□ **Sample sentences:**

- E.g. I gave Peter **an eraser** as **a gift**.
- E.g. We have **an oral exam** every Monday morning.

3. Definite article: the

■ **Definite article 定冠詞: the**

- To describe specific person (or people) or thing (or things).
- It can be used before a countable or uncountable noun.

□ **Rules:**

- (1) Use “the” when the noun names **the only one (or one) of a kind**.
 - Examples: the sun, the world, the moon, the sky, the sea, the best student
- (2) Use “the” when the noun is related to **national disciplined services**.
 - Examples: the police, the army, the air force, the navy
- (3) Use “the” when you describe **specific location**.
 - Examples: the top, the bottom, the left, the right, the middle, the end
- (4) Use “the” before the **musical instrument**.
 - Examples: the piano, the violin, the cello, the flute, the drum, the guitar, the clarinet

□ **Sample sentences:**

- E.g. **The tree** over there is very old.
- E.g. I believe you are **the best student** in your class.

4. Comparison of “indefinite articles” and “definite article”

a / an

the

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wendy is a student . | <input type="checkbox"/> Wendy is the tallest student in the basketball team. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pass me a book . | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass me the book . (指明那一本書) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beijing is an ancient city . | <input type="checkbox"/> Beijing is the capital of China. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> There is a schoolbag over there. | <input type="checkbox"/> The schoolbag over there is mine. |

5. Zero article

- **Zero article 零冠詞**
 - A noun is not preceded by an article (i.e., a, an, or the).
 - Rules:**
 - (1) when talking in general about plural or uncountable nouns
 - E.g. Life is so hard for **retailers** under the outbreak of the coronavirus.
 - (2) when referring to proper nouns
 - E.g. I will go to **University of Cambridge** in autumn.
 - E.g. **National Gallery** will be closed at noon.
 - (3) when referring to certain times
 - E.g. Ghosts show up at **night**.
 - E.g. I will meet my instructor **tomorrow**.



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- (4) when referring to meals and sports
 - E.g. I **have breakfast** in canteen every day.
 - E.g. I love **playing basketball / chess / table tennis**.