

Articles

Articles (*a/an, the*) are used before nouns to signal generality or specificity. We can generally determine whether to use an article and which article to use by determining the noun's countability.

COUNT NOUNS		
<p>People, places, and things that we are able to count.</p> <p>Ex: twenty <u>students</u>, five <u>children</u>, six <u>cities</u>, and five hundred twenty-five thousand six hundred <u>minutes</u></p>	<p>A/an for non-specific nouns & the first mention of a particular noun</p> <p>The for specific nouns</p> <p>The is optional for countable, general, plural nouns.</p>	<p>A <u>dog</u> sat on the <u>sidewalk</u> watching an <u>ant</u>.</p> <p>The <u>neighbor's dog</u> sat on the <u>sidewalk</u>.</p> <p>The <u>dogs</u> sat on the sidewalk. <u>Dogs</u> sat on the sidewalk.</p>
NON-COUNT NOUNS		
<p>Items and concepts that cannot be physically counted.</p> <p>For example: <u>air</u>, <u>happiness</u>, <u>arthritis</u>, and <u>money</u></p> <p>Hint: if a noun can be made plural, it is likely not a non-count noun.</p>	<p>For non-count nouns, no articles are needed.</p>	<p>I need advice about <u>work</u>.</p> <p><u>Sunshine</u> is better than <u>rain</u>.</p>
PROPER NOUNS		
<p>Nouns that designate a particular and specific noun. For example: Ivy Tech Community College, President Joe Biden, and Indianapolis.</p>	<p>For proper nouns, we use the for most plural proper nouns and some singular proper nouns.</p>	<p>The Great Dane, Buster, sat on the sidewalk.</p> <p>Buster sat on the sidewalk.</p> <p>I'm going to the White House.</p>

We use "a" here to because we are introducing the concept and don't have any specifics about it yet.

There are multiple good brands of lawn mowers. We use "a" because we could hypothetically count many good lawn mower options.

Running **a** lawn care business is hard, but it is worth the work. To start **the** business, customers must be found. Once the customers have been found, equipment needs to be purchased. **A** good lawn mower with a bag to collect the cuttings is very helpful. Next, a schedule needs to be made, and the lawns need to be mowed. This takes a lot of time. Finally, the money needs to be collected. This is the rewarding part! By following these steps, thousands of dollars can be earned by **an** employee in this business.

In the second sentence, we are able to be more specific, as we've already introduced the idea of a lawn care business and are referring to the specific lawn care business we are starting.

We use a when the countable noun starts with a consonant sound. We use an when the countable noun starts with a vowel sound: **An** hour, **A** lawnmower, **A** business, **An** entrepreneur.