



ARTICLES

The words '**a, an, and the**' are special adjectives called articles.

They are divided as:

- **Definite Articles**
- **Indefinite Articles**

The definite article **the** is the most frequent word in English.

We use the definite article in front of a noun when we believe the **hearer/reader knows** exactly what we are referring to.

- because there is **only one**:

The Pope is visiting Russia.

The moon is very bright tonight.

The Shah of Iran was deposed in 1979.

This is why we use the definite article with a superlative adjective:

He is **the tallest boy** in the class.

It is **the oldest building** in the town.

- because there is **only one in that place** or in those surroundings:

We live in a small village next to the church.	=	(the church in our village)
Dad, can I borrow the car?	=	(the car that belongs to our family)
When we stayed at my grandmother's house we went to the beach every day.	=	(the beach near my grandmother's house)
Look at the boy in the blue shirt over there.	=	(the boy I am pointing at)



- because we have **already mentioned** it:

A woman who fell 10 metres from High Peak was lifted to safety by a helicopter. **The woman** fell while climbing.

The rescue is the latest in a series of incidents on High Peak. In January last year two men walking on **the peak** were killed in a fall.

We also use the definite article:

- to say something about **all the things** referred to by a noun:

The wolf is not really a dangerous animal (= Wolves are not really dangerous animals)

The kangaroo is found only in Australia (= Kangaroos are found only in Australia)

The heart pumps blood around the body. (= Hearts pump blood around bodies)

We use the definite article in this way to talk about **musical instruments**:

Joe plays the piano really well.(= Joe can play any piano)

She is learning the guitar.(= She is learning to play any guitar)

- to refer to a **system** or **service**:

How long does it take on **the train**?

I heard it on **the radio**.

You should tell **the police**.

- With **adjectives** like rich, poor, elderly, unemployed to talk about **groups of people**:

Life can be very hard for **the poor**.

I think **the rich** should pay more taxes.

She works for a group to help **the disabled**.

The definite article with names:

We do not normally use the definite article with names:

William Shakespeare wrote Hamlet.

Paris is the capital of France.

Iran is in Asia.

But we do use the definite article with:

- **countries** whose names include words like **kingdom**, **states** or **republic**:

the United Kingdom; the Kingdom of Nepal; the United States; the People's Republic of China.

- **countries** which have **plural nouns** as their names:

the Netherlands; the Philippines

- **geographical features**, such as mountain ranges, groups of islands, rivers, seas, oceans and canals:



the Himalayas; the Canaries; the Atlantic; the Atlantic Ocean; the Amazon; the Panama Canal.

- **newspapers:**

The Times; The Washington Post

- well known **buildings** or **works of art:**

the Empire State Building; the Taj Mahal; the Mona Lisa; the Sunflowers

- **organisations:**

the United Nations; the Seamen's Union

- **hotels, pubs and restaurants*:**

the Ritz; the Ritz Hotel; the King's Head; the Déjà Vu

*Note: We do not use the definite article if the name of the hotel or restaurant is the name of the owner, e.g., Brown's; Brown's Hotel; Morel's; Morel's Restaurant, etc.

- **families:**

the Obamas; the Jacksons