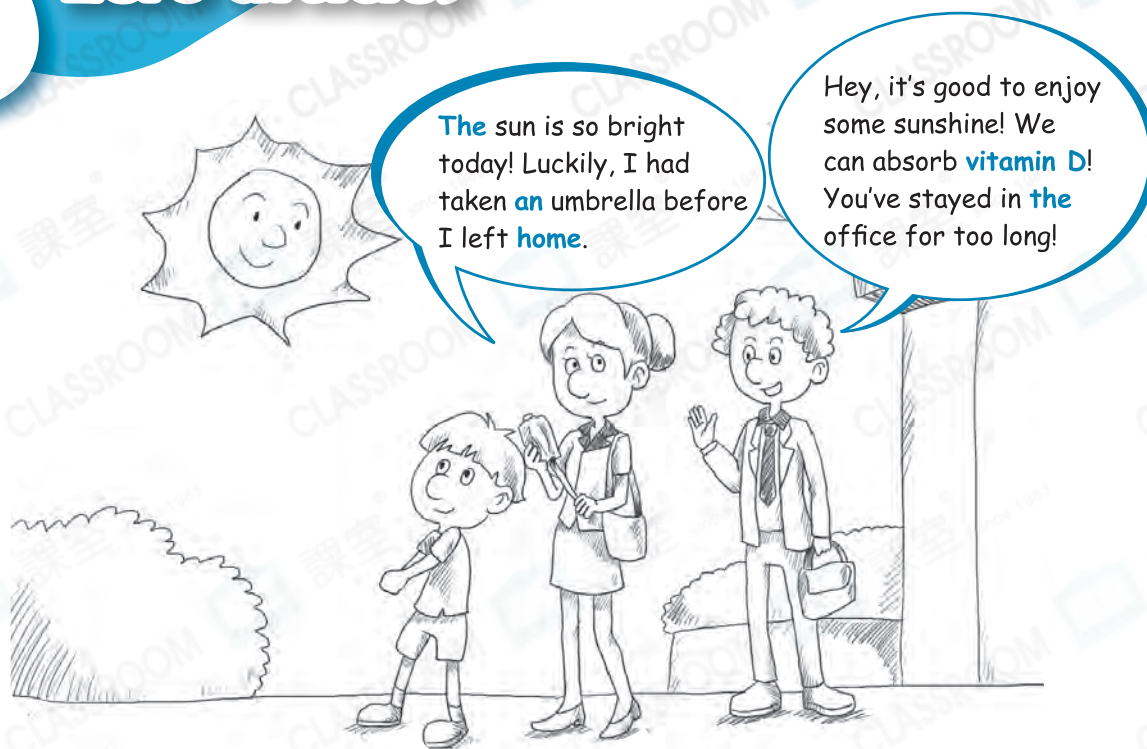


6

Zero articles



Usage

We usually use an article before a noun. However, we do not put an article before certain nouns.

- e.g. **Erin** is leaving the city on **Monday**.
- e.g. Did you and your family go to **Alaska** at **Christmas**?
- e.g. I felt sick at **work** so I went **home** early.



Part 1 Revision: A, An, The

We use the articles *a* and *an* with singular countable nouns when we talk about someone or something **for the first time**.

- e.g. There was **a** customer in my shop. She was looking at **an** elegant dress.

We use *the* with both countable and uncountable nouns in the following situations:

Situation	Example
When we talk about someone or something mentioned before	There was a <u>customer</u> in my shop. The <u>customer</u> finally bought a handbag.
When it is clear who or what we talk about	Pour the <u>wine</u> into the <u>glasses</u> . Please turn on the <u>lights</u> and <u>fans</u> .
When there is only one of a person or a thing	The <u>moon</u> is bright tonight.

Exercise 1

Circle the correct words in brackets.

1. Emma wanted to visit (an / the) Asian city so she decided to fly to Hong Kong.
2. Our school is going to buy (a / the) new computer next week.
3. Can you pass me (a / the) salt, please?
4. After the movie, Maggie went to a cafe and spent (an / a) hour there.
5. Yoyo borrowed a DVD from me last week. She returned (a / the) DVD today.
6. Remember to bring (an / the) umbrella before you go out. It's going to rain.
7. Amy's neighbour bought (a / the) dog last week. It always barks at night.
8. Do you want to travel to (a / the) Philippines?



Part 2 Talking About Things in General

We do not use an article before a plural or uncountable noun when we talk about it in general.

e.g. Dad likes to eat **lobsters** a lot. (= Dad likes all lobsters.)

e.g. **Human beings** must have **food** and **water** to live.



Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks with the correct articles. Write a 'X' if no articles are needed.

1. Do you like _____^X_____ cupcakes? If so, I can make _____^a_____ cupcake for you.
2. Little Tom dreamt of becoming _____ angel last night.
3. I don't like eating _____ crabs. Can we have _____ Korean food for dinner?
4. Is your sister _____ nurse? I know that _____ nurses need to work in shifts.
5. Generally speaking, _____ boys are physically stronger than girls.
6. Jennifer Lawrence wore _____ beautiful white dress to The Oscars.
7. Dan borrowed _____ novel from the library. _____ story is about wizards.
8. You need _____ butter, _____ bread and _____ sugar to make bread pudding.



Part 3 Proper Names

We do not use an article before the following proper names:

Proper name	Example
Names of people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hello, my name is Amy Yeung. What advice did Dr Cheung give you?
Names of continents, certain countries, cities, districts and streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canada is the biggest country in North America. Nathan Road is one of the most crowded streets in Hong Kong. I live in Shum Shui Po.
Names of certain mountains and islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you want to climb up Mount Everest? Not many people live on Lamma Island.
Months and days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My sister's wedding is going to be held in June. Are you free on Friday?
Festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don bought me a box of chocolate at Christmas. We sweep the graves of our ancestors at Chung Yeung Festival.

Exercise 3

Fill in the blanks with the correct articles. Write a 'X' if no articles are needed.

- Are you free on _____ Monday? Let's go visit _____ art exhibition.
- Children can get red packets at _____ Chinese New Year.
- Allan: Hi, _____ Emily. Do you know Justin is coming to _____ Hong Kong soon?

Emily: I know! He's coming from _____ Europe and is holding a concert in _____ Tsim Sha Tsui. I've already bought _____ ticket for it.

- Ann: We're going to climb _____ Sunset Peak on _____ Lantau Island this weekend. Will you come?

Peter: I have an English class on _____ Saturdays in _____ November. I'm sorry that I can't join.

- Yesterday, Edward woke up at 8 am and found that his alarm hadn't rung at 7 am! He grabbed his schoolbag and dashed to _____ door. After he arrived at school, he found that _____ school gate was closed. Then he saw that there was _____ digital clock near the gate. It showed _____ date—_____ Sunday the 14th of June!



Part 4 Certain Expressions

We do not use an article with the following expressions:

Expression	Example
by bus / train / ferry / MTR ...	Did the students go to the museum by MTR ?
on foot	They went to the cinema on foot .
at / go / from home	The children are not willing to go home yet.
at night / midnight / noon	Jacky suddenly woke up at midnight .
at / from work	I met a new colleague at work today.
in hospital / prison	The injured girl stayed in hospital for a week.
go to school / church / university	My brother will go to university next year.
go to / in bed	When do you usually go to bed ?
on holiday	Wilson will be on holiday for one week.
read / write / speak English / German ...	I am learning to speak German .



Educator's Tips



We use an article before the word *television* or *TV* if we are referring to the television set, not the television programme.

e.g. Yoyo **watched TV** in the living room. (A television programme)

e.g. We are shopping for **a TV** because the old one has broken down.
(A television set)

We do not use an article with '*have / at / for + name of a meal*'; while we use an article if there is an adjective before the name of a meal.

e.g. We are having fruit salad **for lunch**.

e.g. We are having **a healthy lunch**.

Exercise 4

Fill in the blanks with the correct articles. Write a 'X' if no articles are needed.

- Max was sent to _____ prison for ten years.
- Anna seldom goes to _____ work by _____ bus because it is usually crowded.
- My family is going to hold _____ party at _____ noon this Sunday. Will you come?
I know you are on _____ holiday.
- My parents are away from _____ home on weekdays.

5. Jack: Are you going to have _____ dinner with me, darling?

Rose: Are we going to have _____ romantic dinner at The Peak?

6. Emily: I love Korean dramas so much. I want to learn _____ Korean.

Jan: I don't like _____ language. I prefer learning _____ Japanese.

7. We bought _____ 50" OLED TV yesterday. Mum was so excited that she was watching _____ TV for the whole day.

Unit Recap

Hannah wrote a blog entry. Decide whether the underlined articles are correct or not. If they are correct, put a tick (✓) in the spaces provided. If they are incorrect, write the correct words there. If they are not needed, write a 'X' there.

30th Aug, 20XX

My unforgettable summer

My cousin, Athena, came a long way from (1) an United States to Hong Kong to visit me this summer. We have a lot of things in common. For example, we both love going to (2) the beach, reading books and listening to music. We had a nice time together. When it was (3) the sunny day, we hung out on outlying islands like (4) the Lantau Island. We shared the same bedroom during her stay. Sometimes when we couldn't sleep at (5) a night, we told secrets to each other in (6) the bed or danced until we were tired! It was (7) the Sunday afternoon when she flew back (8) the home. We cried at (9) the airport because it was hard for us to part. She promised to come again at (10) the Easter next year!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____



Vocabulary:

outlying (adj.): far from the city centre, town, etc