

Using Articles - Exceptions When Using "the"

Here you can learn about

• major exceptions when writing *the*.

This sheet is linked to <u>Information Sheet 2</u>: <u>Using Articles – The Basics</u>. An associated work sheet is also available.

Common Special Cases for Using/Not Using the

- Use *the* with
- o a superlative adjective/adverb, e.g., he is the tallest in the class
- when referring to certain topics, e.g., entertainment-related (*the cinema, the pub, the shops*), transport-related (*the bus, the airport*), musical instruments (*the piano*), scientific instruments and inventions (*the printer*)
- when referring to the physical environment (*the sea, the wind, the weather*).
- Although *the* is not commonly used for proper nouns (the nouns in English that start with a capital letter), here are some exceptions.
 - o united countries, e.g., the United States of America;
 - large regions/deserts e.g., the Sahara;
 - o peninsulas, e.g., the Iberian Peninsula;
 - o oceans/seas/gulfs, e.g., the Pacific;
 - o canals/rivers, e.g., the Suez Canal;
 - o mountain ranges, e.g., the Alps;
 - o groups of islands, e.g., the Orkneys.
 - o political bodies, e.g., the Labour Party
 - o hotels, e.g., the Hilton
 - o newspapers, e.g., the Daily Mirror
- Don't use the in the following instances
- When referring to an 'institution' (e.g., hospital, church, school, college ...) when you want to imply the person is part of that institution, e.g., *she is still at university, she goes to church*.
- o When referring to meals, e.g., she is eating lunch



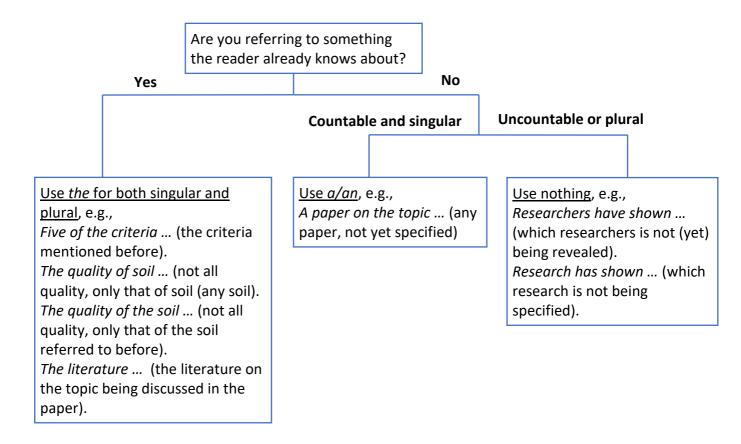


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- When referring to time, e.g., *next week, at noon. The weekend* is one of the few exceptions here.
- When you have used a possessive determiner, e.g., *our experiment*, or *this*, *that*, *these*, *those*, e.g., *These results*
- o Before both and all, e.g., we followed all instructions
- With jobs and positions, e.g., *he was elected as deputy speaker*.
- When the noun is followed by a categorizing letter or number, e.g., Section 2.

The following diagram sketches the basics of how to use articles







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