

Articles A, An, The – Ultimate Cheat Sheet

1. When to Use “A”

- Before singular, countable nouns starting with a consonant SOUND.

Examples:

- a book
- a cat
- a university (starts with /yu/ sound)

2. When to Use “An”

- Before singular, countable nouns starting with a vowel SOUND.

Examples:

- an apple
- an hour (silent h)
- an honest man

3. When to Use “The”

- When both speaker and listener know the noun.
- Before unique things (the sun, the earth).
- Before superlatives (the best, the tallest).
- Before specific places (the bank near my house).

4. Zero Article (No Article)

- With plural or uncountable nouns when speaking generally.

Examples:

- I love dogs.
- She drinks water.

5. Common Mistakes + Fixes

- ■ I saw an university. ✓ I saw a university.
- ■ She is a honest girl. ✓ She is an honest girl.
- ■ The life is short. ✓ Life is short.

6. Pro Tips to Master Articles

- Think about SOUND, not spelling.
- When unsure between “a” and “the”, choose “a” (safer).
- Notice articles when watching movies or reading stories.
- Practice daily: describe objects around you using articles.