Articles

Definition: Articles are similar to adjectives because they are used to modify nouns. Articles differentiate between things or ideas. There are two types of articles: definite and indefinite. The speaker/writer may be referring to a specific thing or idea, or a general one.

Types of Articles:

1. [The] definite article is used to modify a specific noun. It can be used before singular and plural nouns, and it pertains to a particular member of a group.
   
   Ex: No matter how many times I tried, I couldn't get the gate open.
   Ex: The cat didn't want to eat the fish.
   Ex: Why are the doors locked?
   Ex: They went to the mall after school.

2. The indefinite articles are a, and an. They are used to modify unspecific nouns. Indefinite articles refer to any member of a group.

   Ex: A campsite is usually in the woods.
   Ex: Susan said, "It was an honor to meet you."
   Ex: Super strength is an ability reserved for comic book heroes.

When to use [the]:

1. Use [the] definite article for non-count nouns (words that can't be pluralized), or it can simply be omitted.

   Ex: I love to sail over the water.
   I love to sail over water.
Countable nouns refer to things that we can count. Such nouns can take either singular or plural form.

Uncountable nouns refer to things that we cannot count. Such nouns take only singular form.

2. Use [the] with count nouns the second and subsequent times you use the noun, or when the listener already knows what you are referring to.
   Ex: I've misplaced the pen you gave me yesterday.
   Ex: I think the dog belongs to our new neighbors.

3. Use [the] before singular and plural nouns when the noun is specific.
   Ex: The instructor I spoke to at the school was very kind.
   Ex: The lawyers were on time for their morning meeting.

When to use "A/An":

1. Use indefinite articles only for singular count nouns.
   Ex: You are welcome as a guest in our home.

2. Use "a" for general statements.
   Ex: He didn't have a crayon.
   Ex: Animals live in a barn.

3. You usually use a/an with a count noun the first time you say or write that noun.
   Ex: Can I borrow a pencil, please?
   Ex: There's an animal in the backyard.

4. Use "an" before a vowel or a vowel sound
   Ex: It would be a good idea to call an electrician.
Ex: I will be meet you in an hour.

**When **not **to use articles:**

1. Don't use the definite article to talk about general things.
   
   Ex: I love reading the books. (Incorrect.)
   
   Ex: I love reading books. (Correct.)

2. Don't use "A" and "the" with plural nouns.
   
   Ex: Girls like to play soccer.

3. Don't use [the] definite articles before:
   
   - Names
   - Holidays
   - Languages
   - Geography
   - Companies
   - Universities
   - Acronyms
   - Countries, cities, or states

**YouTube Links:**

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CiA9BCRPBk

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zJQoQLCeNo

**Online resources:**

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/540/01/

http://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/articles.htm

http://esl.fis.edu/grammar/rules/article.htm

http://www.ecenglish.com/learnenglish/lessons/how-use-articles