



### Choosing Articles A or The?

In English articles specify if a noun is known (definite) or unknown (indefinite) and if it can be counted. If the noun is general or indefinite, then **a** or **an** is used. If the noun is specific, special or definite, then **the** is used.

#### Definite Article: the

If the noun is a specific, or definite, then **the** is used.

The definite article “**the**” can be used before both singular and plural nouns and shows that the noun is a member of a specific group.

**The** boy is a baseball player.

**The** boys are baseball players

**The** movie won an Oscar.

**The** movies won Oscars.

Definite articles note that the noun is unique:

**The** hospital is on Monroe Street.

**The** hospitals were refurbished.

**The** President of the United States is from Texas.

**The** Presidents posed for a picture.

Nouns of an unknown quantity are made specific with the use of **the**:

**The** music has been chosen.

(no article) Music lifts my spirits.

Guinness was **the** beer chosen.

(no article) Beer goes well with brats.

#### Indefinite Articles: a, an, and some

If the noun is general, referring to any member of the group, then **a**, or **an** is used to modify the indefinite singular noun and **some** is used for plural nouns. In English, **a** is used before consonant nouns and **an** before nouns beginning with vowel sounds.

**A** song was sung to start the show.

**Some** songs were sung to start the show.

**An** opera was sung to honor the guest.

**Some** operas were written to honor the King.