



## Using Definite and Indefinite Articles

### Using "The": Definite Nouns

A noun is definite when both the speaker and the listeners are thinking about the same specific thing. Keep in mind that *the* is used with both singular and plural count nouns and with non-count nouns.

Singular Count Noun	Thank you for <b>the</b> daisy.	The speaker uses <b>the</b> because the listener knows which specific daisies the speaker is talking about.
Plural Count Noun	Thank you for <b>the</b> daisies.	
Non-count Noun	Thank goodness for <b>the</b> rain.	The speaker is referring to an occurrence shared with the listener.

### Using "A" or Nothing: Generic Nouns

A speaker uses generic nouns to make generalizations. A generic noun represents a whole class of things rather than a definite or specific thing. Unlike *the*, *a* is not used with plural or non-count nouns.

Singular Count Noun	<b>A</b> daisy is yellow.	The speaker is talking about any daisy or daisies in general.
Plural Count Noun	Daisies are yellow.	Notice that no article is used to make generalizations with plural and non-count nouns.
Non-count Noun	Rain makes flowers grow.	

### Using "A" or "Some": Indefinite Nouns

Indefinite nouns are actual things, not symbols, but they are not specifically identified. With a singular count noun, the speaker refers to one thing (*a* flower) in a group of things (all the flowers in the world), and the listener does not need to know which specific thing (which flower) is referenced. With a plural or non-count noun, the speaker refers to a part of the group of things, but the listener does not need to know which specific part.

Singular Count Noun	I saw <b>a</b> daisy.	The speaker is not referring to "this daisy" or "that daisy" or "the daisy you gave me." It's not a specific daisy, but one out of all the daisies in the world.
Plural Count Noun	I saw <b>some</b> daisies.	In addition to <b>some</b> , <b>a few</b> , <b>several</b> or <b>a lot of</b> can be used with plural nouns. <b>A little</b> or <b>a lot of</b> can be used with non-count nouns.
Non-count Noun	I felt <b>some</b> rain.	

