

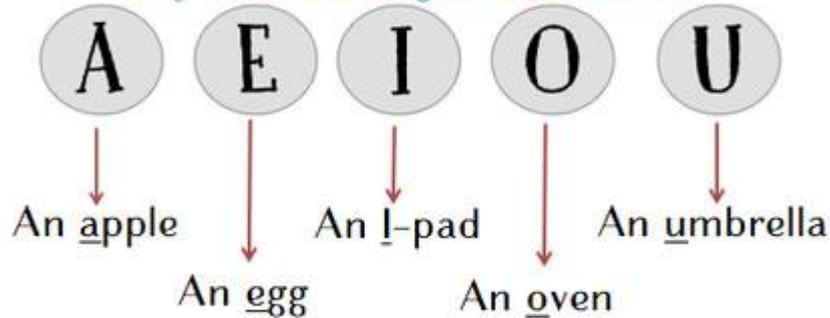
A vs An - Learning basic English grammar free online in PDF

A / an / the learning basic English

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WHEN TO USE 'AN'

Any word that begins with a vowel



WHEN TO USE 'A'

Any word that begins with a consonant (not a vowel)

A book A dog bone A town
A cup of coffee A house A drink

A vs an in English

First, let's compare **a** and **an**

Use the letter **a** before words that begin with **consonants**

Consonants = b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y and z

Examples. a nurse, a big tree, a boy

Use the letter **an** before words that begin with **vowels**.

Vowels = a, e, i, o and u

Examples an orange, an interesting movie, an apple

A and an rules English

You have to use **a** before **u** when the word sounds like 'you' and before **eu**

Example of a word that begins with u = university = a university

Example of a word that begins with **eu** = a European city.

You have to use an before words that begin with a silent h.

Example = an hour (silent 'h')

A / an explained



A /- An explained



VOWELS

A E I O U

CONSONANTS

B C D F G H J K L M N P Q R S T V W X Y Z

A

We usually use A before nouns or adjectives which begin with a consonant

I want to buy a big house. Would you like a banana?

HOWEVER, use A before words which begin with a 'YOU' sound.

I want a unicorn. It's a unique course. She wears a uniform.

Note. I have an umbrella (umbrella starts with an 'a' sound)

AN

We usually use AN before nouns or adjectives which begin with a vowel

I can see an elephant and an ugly ape.

HOWEVER, use AN before words whose first syllable has the sound of a vowel.

It was an honour to travel at 5 miles an hour (H isn't pronounced)

Note. My brother has a horse (H is pronounced)



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Now, let's compare a / an / the

Tony: I bought a football and a football boots yesterday.

Julian: Was the football boots expensive?

Rules for a / an /the

As a rule you use **a / an** with a noun to talk about a person or about a thing for the first time

an apple

When you need to talk about the person or a thing again.

The apple was very tasty

Special rules for a / an/ the

You have to use **a / an** with the following:- Prices, frequency and speeds.

Prices = Petrol costs £3 a gallon.

Frequency = I eat three bananas a day.

Speeds = He was driving at 60 miles an hour.

You also use a / an before hundred, thousand, and million

A hundred cars

A thousand flowers

You also use a / an when talking about jobs.

An English teacher.

A painter.

You use the when there is only one of something.

May I go to the park?

Where's Tony? He in the office.

You also have to use the when talking about musical instruments

I play the drums.

Kitty plays the piano.



A / an / the explained and how to use them



a - an - the - no article



A/an	Example	The	Example	No article	Example
Used for objects that are not specific, or one of a number.	What a nice day!	Used for specific objects, or objects that both the speaker and listener know.	The rain is awful!	Used when we talk about non-specific things in plural.	Storms are raging all over the country.
Used the first time we introduce an object.	I ate in a nice French restaurant.	Used when we mention the object again.	The restaurant had an amazing menu.	Used to speak about things in general.	I love eating in restaurants.
Used as synonyms for the number one.	A hundred. Make a wish.	Used before plural countries or other plural regions and bodies of water.	The United Kingdom, The Netherlands, The Alps, The great lakes, The Pacific ocean, The Nile, The Black sea.	Used for all other countries, states, provinces, cities, lakes and mountains.	France, Washington, New South Wales, Mount Everest
Used to indicate one of a group.	She is a nun, I am a teacher.	Used before collective nouns.	The Tiger is a fierce creature.	Used for things in general.	Anna likes reading.
				Used for meals and places	Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. I go to University.



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When not to use A / an



Don't use a / an with



No article

We don't usually use *a/an* or *the* with:

people's names and titles	<i>David Mr Brown Professor Smith Uncle John</i>
named shops and companies	<i>Harrods Tesco Microsoft United Airlines</i>
cities, towns, states and regions	<i>London Sydney Madrid Florida Tuscany</i>
most countries and continents	<i>Russia Japan Turkey Australia Asia Europe Africa</i>
mountains, hills and lakes	<i>Mount Vesuvius Box Hill Lake Placid</i>
most roads, streets, squares and parks	<i>Park Lane Oxford Street Trafalgar Square Times Square Central Park (BUT the M25 the high street)</i>
named airports and stations	<i>Miami Airport Birmingham Bus Station Victoria Station</i>
schools, universities, etc.	<i>Bradford Grammar School Yale University</i>
times, days and months	<i>at three o'clock at midday on Monday in December</i>
languages, school subjects and sports	<i>English Polish history basketball tennis football</i>
means of transport and communication	<i>by train by bus by email by phone (BUT on foot and in person)</i>
meals	<i>What time is dinner? Let's meet after lunch. (BUT a snack)</i>
nouns + numbers	<i>Go to check-in 3A. I'm in Room 334. Look at page 98.</i>



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