

- English Grammar in Use (Grammar Addition to the Textbook English for Pharmacy and Medical Bioanalytics)
- Mgr. Zuzana Katerová
- Definite Article

Definite article: the

The definite article *the* is the most frequent word in English.

We use the definite article in front of a noun when we believe the **hearer/reader knows** exactly what we are referring to.

- if there is **only one**:

The Pope is visiting Russia.

The moon is very bright tonight.

... the sun, the Earth, the internet, the space, the ground, the sky ...

- we use the definite article with a **superlative adjective**:

He is **the tallest boy** in the class.

It is **the oldest building** in the town.

He is **the most intelligent student** at the faculty.



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- because there is **only one in that place** or in those surroundings:

We live in a small village next to the church .	= (the church in our village)
Dad, can I borrow the car ?	= (the car that belongs to our family)
When we stayed at my grandmother's house we went to the beach every day.	= (the beach near my grandmother's house)
Look at the boy in the blue shirt over there.	= (the boy I am pointing at)

- because we have **already mentioned it**:

A woman who fell 10 meters from High Peak was lifted to safety by a helicopter. **The woman** fell while climbing.

The rescue is the latest in a series of incidents on High Peak. In January last year two men walking on **the peak** were killed in a fall.

- to say something about **all the things** referred to by a noun:

The wolf is not really a dangerous animal (= Wolves are not really dangerous animals)

The kangaroo is found only in Australia (= Kangaroos are found only in Australia)

The heart pumps blood around the body. (= Hearts pump blood around bodies)

- to talk about **musical instruments**:

Joe plays **the piano** really well.(= Joe can play any piano)

She is learning **the guitar**.(= She is learning to play any guitar)



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- to refer to a **system** or **service**:

How long does it take on **the train**.

I heard it on **the radio**.

You should tell **the police**.

- With **adjectives** like rich, poor, elderly, unemployed to talk about **groups of people**:

Life can be very hard for **the poor**.

I think **the rich** should pay more taxes.

She works for a group to help **the disabled**.

- we **do not** normally **use** the definite article **with names**:

William Shakespeare wrote Hamlet.

Paris is the capital of France.

Iran is in Asia.

But we do use the definite article with:

- **countries** whose names include words like *kingdom*, *states* or *republic*:

the United Kingdom; the Kingdom of Nepal; the United States; the People's Republic of China

- **countries** which have **plural nouns** as their names:

the Netherlands; the Philippines

- **geographical features**, such as mountain ranges, groups of islands, rivers, seas, oceans and canals:

the Himalayas; the Canaries; the Atlantic; the Atlantic Ocean; the Amazon; the Panama Canal



• **newspapers:**

The Times; The Washington Post

• **buildings, well known buildings:**

the cinema, the theatre, the railway station, the Empire State Building

• **works of art**

the Mona Lisa; the Sunflowers

organizations:

the United Nations; the European Union

• **hotels, pubs and restaurants*:**

the Ritz; the Ritz Hotel; the King's Head;

*Note: We do not use the definite article if the name of the hotel or restaurant is the name of the owner, e.g., Brown's; Brown's Hotel; Morel's; Morel's Restaurant, etc.

• **families:**

the Obamas; the Jacksons

