

Determiners

What are Determiners?

Determiners are those words that are prefixed before nouns to determine their meaning. They can be divided into the following types:

- **Articles**- a, an, the
- **Demonstratives**- this, that, these, those
- **Possessives**- my, your, our, his, her, its, their
- **Indefinite Adjectives**- some, any, much, many, little, few, less
- **Others**- all, each, every, both, neither, either, other, another, enough, most, several, one, two, etc.

Articles

The two indefinite articles in the English language are 'a' and 'an'. The definite article in the English language is 'the'. For indefinite articles, you can use either of them depending upon the sound of the first letter of the next word. This is done for pronunciation reasons.

Use of 'a' takes place in the following instances –

- In places where the following word starts with a consonant sound, the determiner 'a' is used. 2. Also, 'a' is used where the following word is a singular countable noun.
The determiner 'an' also does the same work as 'a' but is used in the following instances –
 - (i) places where the following word is a singular countable noun and starts with a vowel sound (a, e, i, o, u).
 - (ii) 'The' is mostly used before both singular and plural nouns. Its main function of use is that it is used to specify a person, place or thing.

Uses of Articles with Rules and Examples:

'a' and 'an' (Indefinite Determiners) are used before the following-

- A singular countable noun which is being mentioned for the first time. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) I have never seen a gun.
 - (ii) I saw a sports bike at the store today.
- A singular countable noun or adjective beginning with a consonant sound. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

- (i) I ate a banana.
- (ii) I saw a tall girl today.
- A singular, countable noun which is an example of a class of things. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) A pet needs love. (Class of things is pets)
 - (ii) A father deserves to be respected by his children.
- The noun to express a quantity. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) I need a dozen bananas.
 - (ii) I need to buy a couple of books.
- The units of price, speed, ratio, weight etc. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) This bike gives 35 kilometers a liter.
 - (ii) You can run a mile in just 5 minutes.
- Certain numbers or monetary units. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) I want to earn a billion dollars by the age of 40.
 - (ii) Can you lend me a hundred rupees?
- The expression of frequency. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) Put these ear drops twice a day.
 - (ii) Wash your face three times a day in summers.
- Certain exclamatory expressions. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) What a beautiful morning!
 - (ii) What a cute dog!

Few Important rules to remember about the use of indefinite determiners:

- The spelling of the word following the determiner is not important, only the sound is important. Few words given below start with vowel letters but do not have vowel sounds. So the determiner 'a' is attached to them. For example:

A union, A one rupee coin, etc.

- There are a few words that start with consonant letters but have vowel sounds. They are preceded by the determiner 'an'.

For example: An honest man, An honour.

- Indefinite determiners are mostly prefixed before the noun that does not refer to any particular person, place or thing.

For example: A cat, a boy, an hour

- Indefinite determiners can be used before uncountable nouns if the noun is used in a particular sense.

For example: I always have tea after my lunch. She is a great pianist.

- An indefinite determiner can be attached before the adjective if the adjective is followed by a countable noun. For example:

It is a red colored T-shirt.

He is a hard working man.

'The' (Definite Determiners) is used before the following-

- A singular noun when it refers to a particular class or group. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i)** The luxury car is a rich man's vehicle.
 - (ii)** My brother has joined the NDA.
- Names of rivers, ranges of mountains, gulfs, seas, oceans, groups, islands, ships, etc.
 - (i)** The Jamuna river
 - (ii)** The Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
 - (iii)** The Titanic
 - (iv)** The Shivalik range of mountains.
- Countries with plural names.
 - (i)** The Philippines
 - (ii)** The Maldives
- Books of religion (Religious books).
 - (i)** The Shreemad Bhagavad Gita
 - (ii)** The Holy Quran
- Names of hotels, museums, and certain building names
 - (i)** The Oberoi group of Hotels
 - (ii)** The Burj Khalifa.
- Last names of families in the plural.
 - (i)** The Madans
 - (ii)** The Malhotras
- Names of newspapers and magazines.
 - (i)** The Top Gear
 - (ii)** The Hindustan Times

- Superlatives of adjectives.
 - (i) The best boy in the class.
 - (ii) The tallest building in the world.
- Descriptive adjectives referring to a whole group or class.
 - (i) The working class.
 - (ii) The middle class.
- The names of races and communities.
 - (i) The Hindu
 - (ii) The Christian
- Few expressions of the English language.
 - (i) All the colleagues.
 - (ii) Both the sisters.

Few Places where the definite determiner 'The' should not be used are as follows –

- 'The' should not be used before abstract nouns, plural nouns, proper nouns, names of meals, colours, materials when they are being used in general sense.
 - (i) They should not be used before the name of games.
 - (a) The expression like all day, by road, by air.

Demonstratives

The demonstrative determiners in the English language are this, that, these, those.

- The demonstrative determiner 'That' (Plural- Those) is used to avoid repetition of a preceding noun. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) My shorts are better than those of my brother.
 - (ii) Our defence academies are better than those of Afghanistan.
- The demonstrative determiner 'This (Plural- These)' is used to refer to a person/ persons or thing/ things near to the speaker. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) This is the best coffee I have had.
 - (ii) These magazines are very good.
- The demonstrative determiner 'That (Plural- Those)' refers to a person/ persons or thing/ things far from the speaker. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
 - (i) Get that dog out of the house.
 - (ii) Throw away those shoes in the garbage.

Possessives

The possessive determiners in the English language are my, your, our, his, her, its, their. These are used to show or determine the ownership of a certain thing.

| Personal Pronouns (Subject) | Possessive Adjective | Possessive Pronoun |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I | My | Mine |
| You | Your | Yours |
| He | His | His |
| She | Her | Hers |
| It | Its | - |
| We | Our | Ours |
| They | Their | Theirs |

Few examples of Possessive determiners are as follows –

- (i)** This is my bike.
- (ii)** It is their house.

Indefinite Adjectives

Below mentioned is the use of Indefinite Adjectives along with formulas and examples-

- (i)** Some
- (ii)** The indefinite adjective 'Some' is generally used in affirmative sentences with uncountable and plural countable nouns. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –
There is some proof that he is guilty.

I have some good ideas on the project.

- It can also be used in questions where 'Yes' is expected as an answer. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

Would you like some tea?

Could you give me some food?

- (i)** Any

(ii) It is used in questions when you want to ask whether something exists or not. It is also used in negative sentences where we want to say that something does not exist. The rule can be understood with the help of the following **example sentences** –

I don't need any help.

Do you have any advice on the matter?

(i) It is also used in affirmative sentences before plural nouns and uncountable nouns when it refers to a quantity of something which may or may not exist. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

You can stop at any point you like.

(i) Little and Much

(ii) These are used to refer to amount or quantity. Little is used to emphasize that there is a small amount of something whereas 'Much' is used for emphasizing on large quantities. Both of them are used with uncountable nouns. Little is also used in reference to small amount of something without any emphasis. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

I want to spend a little time in Dubai.

I have studied very little for my exam.

Do you like to watch much television?

(i) Few and Many

(ii) These are mostly used to refer to a number. They are used before plural countable nouns. Few emphasizes a smaller number and many refer to more numbers. The rule can be understood with the help of the following **example sentences** –

Few students came for the class today.

Many people went to welcome the Indian Cricket team.

They stayed in the U.S.A for a few days.

(i) More, Less and Fewer

(ii) They are mostly used as comparative determiners. 'More' is used before plural and uncountable nouns (with than) to refer to a quantity or amount which is greater than another quantity or amount. It is also used to refer to an additional quantity of something. Less is used to refer to an amount that is less than another amount. Fewer is used where we refer to a group of things that are smaller than another group before plural nouns. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

He does much more cardio than I do.

The poor have less access to cleanliness.

There are fewer cars here.

(i) Others

(ii) There are many other determiners that are used in the English language and can not be put under any fixed category. So we have put them all one by one and then given along are their rules for using them in sentences along with examples.

(iii) All

(iv) All is mostly used with a plural verb when followed by a countable plural noun. It includes all the persons or things of a particular kind. Another rule for it is that it requires a singular verb when it is followed by an uncountable noun. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

All children cannot be treated in the same manner.

(i) Both

(ii) This determiner is mostly used to talk about two things of the same kind. It is used to show that two persons or things are involved rather than one and is often followed by 'and'. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

Both Raman and Raghav went out for a movie.

He held oranges in both his hands.

(i) Either and Neither

(ii) These determiners usually refer to two persons or things but show that one out of the two is or is not involved in a situation. Neither is used mostly with singular nouns and by either, it can mean both of two things especially when it is used with 'end' or 'side'. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

Take either side of the bed, both are the same.

Neither of them is speaking the truth.

(i) Each and Every

(ii) These determiners are used to refer to all members of a group, persons or things. When we talk about members as individuals, we use 'each' and when we make a statement about all of them we use 'every'. They are to be prefixed before a singular countable noun and the verb attached with them should be singular. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

Each and every board member was present in the meeting.

Today a laptop and air conditioner can be seen in each house.

Every child is said to have his/ her own special abilities.

(i) One

(ii) This determiner is used when we are talking or writing about a group and we want to say something about a particular member of the group. It is used in place of 'a' or 'an' and it explains things more clearly. The rule can be understood with the

help of the following example sentences–

I know one restaurant where you can get amazing Chinese food.

One man was falsely framed in a murder case.

(i) Another

(ii) It can be used with a singular countable noun to talk about an additional person or thing of the same type. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

Can I have another cup of coffee?

He opened another branch last month.

(i) Other

(ii) This determiner is used with plural nouns or sometimes with uncountable nouns. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

Other people might not have thought like this.

The students are busy in other activities rather than participating in the math class.

(i) Enough

(ii) The determiner ‘enough’ is used before uncountable nouns or plural nouns to say that there is something that is sufficient and enough as much as needed. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

The hotel had enough rooms for all the guests.

They did not have enough storage to store all that they had ordered for.

(i) Most

(ii) ‘Most’ is used to indicate nearly all of an amount or of a group. The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

Most of the people do not recover from this fatal disease.

Most of the people in India are working class.

(i) Several

(ii) It is usually used to indicate an imprecise number that is not very large but more than two.

The rule can be understood with the help of the following example sentences –

There were several deaths during the floods in U.P.

There were several cases of fraud pending against him in the court.