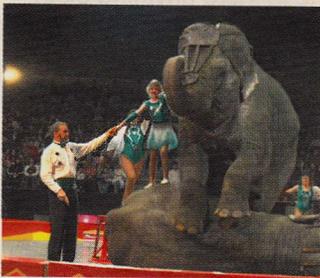


## The Definite Article "The"

The definite article **the** is used with singular and plural nouns. e.g. *the horses, the farm, the man*

### We use "the":

- ◆ with nouns when we are talking about something specific, that is, when the noun is mentioned for a second time or is already known. In other words, when we can answer the question 'Who?' or 'Which?'.



*The elephants in the picture are in a circus. (Which elephants? The elephants we can see in the picture.)*

- ◆ with nouns which are unique.



*the Colosseum, the earth, the sky, the sun*

- ◆ before the names of rivers (*the Amazon*), seas (*the Baltic Sea*), oceans (*the Pacific*), mountain ranges (*the Rocky Mountains*), deserts (*the Gobi*), groups of islands (*the Dodecanese*) and countries when they include words such as 'state', 'kingdom', etc. (*the United States*).
- ◆ before the names of musical instruments. *the piano, the guitar, the saxophone.*
- ◆ before the names of hotels (*the Hilton Hotel*), theatres/cinemas (*the Apollo Theatre*), ships (*the Titanic*), organisations (*the EU*), newspapers (*The Guardian*), and museums (*the Louvre*).
- ◆ before nationality words (*the French*) and families (*the Taylors*).
- ◆ before titles when the person's name is not mentioned. *the Queen, the Prince of Wales*
- ◆ before the words morning, afternoon and evening. *He goes to work in the morning.*

### We don't use "the":

- ◆ with plural nouns when we talk about them in general, that is, when we cannot answer the question 'Who?' or 'Which?'.



*Elephants live in the jungle. (Which elephants? Elephants in general.)*

- ◆ before proper names. *This is Helen.*
- ◆ before the names of countries (*England*), cities (*Paris*), streets (*Mason Avenue*), parks (*Central Park*), mountains (*Everest*), islands (*Santorini*), lakes (*Lake Michigan*) and continents (*Europe*).
- ◆ before the names of meals (*breakfast, lunch, dinner, etc.*) and games/sports (*golf, tennis, basketball, etc.*). *Golf is a relaxing sport.*
- ◆ with the words *this/that/these/those*. *this bag, those cars (NOT: ~~the~~ this bag)*
- ◆ with possessive adjectives or the possessive case. *That isn't my car – it's Keith's.*
- ◆ before titles when the person's name is mentioned. *Queen Elizabeth, President Clinton*
- ◆ with the words school, church, bed, hospital, prison or home when we refer to the purpose for which they exist.
  - Mary goes to school at 8:30 in the morning. (=Mary is a student.)  
Mary's mother went to the school to get Mary's school report. (=Mary's mother went to the school as a visitor, not as a student.)*
  - Grandpa is in hospital. (=He is a patient.)  
Grandma went to the hospital to see Grandpa. (=Grandma visited Grandpa. She isn't a patient.)*