

ENGLISH in use

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NELSON

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Foreword

This new edition of *English in Use* has been prepared with clarity and ease of reference in mind. None of the original material has been omitted from this edition although some of it has been slightly revised. The contents are generously laid out, and ordered for easy reading. The expanded index included in this edition will also be useful for reference to specific points. Solutions to the exercises, previously supplied separately, appear within the covers of the new edition to provide a means of instant checking.

The revision of *English in Use* has not altered the intention of the work in any way. It is designed for students of English as a foreign language at any post-elementary stage up to post-intermediate level i.e. somewhat beyond Cambridge First Certificate.

The items have not been set out in order, as a course, but have been arranged and indexed in a way that allows teachers to select particular items as and when they need them, either for initial teaching or further practice, and in accordance with the requirements of their own teaching and learning situations. *English in Use* can be helpfully and usefully co-ordinated with textbooks, class readers and other learning materials, as occasion demands or permits. The book can also be used profitably by anyone studying on his own.

Cordially, I thank all those colleagues past and present, in many lands, who have tested all the material in *English in Use* and whose recommendations have contributed greatly to my own experience, gained over a good many years of teaching English as a foreign language in Britain and abroad.

G. M. Spankie
October 1981

Indefinite article:

a, an

- Nouns are either countable (one horse, six horses, three girls, two boys) or uncountable (sugar, coal, butter, petrol). Countable nouns take *a*, or before vowels, *an*, to show that the noun is singular and that we do not refer to any particular specimen. *A boy* is any undefined boy.
- When we form the plural of countable nouns we drop *a* and *an*. *A boy* in the singular becomes *boys* in the plural. Uncountable nouns do not generally take the plural form.

exercise 1

Look at the following sentences. Make a list of the countable nouns and another list of the uncountable nouns. Write down the plural form of the countable nouns.

- 1 A potato is a vegetable.
- 2 A dog dislikes a cat.
- 3 A horse often has a long tail.
- 4 A boy likes to play a game.
- 5 A diamond is a beautiful stone.
- 6 A girl likes chocolate.
- 7 We put sugar in a cup of coffee.
- 8 A slice of bread and a piece of cheese make a sandwich.
- 9 We make an omelette with an egg.
- 10 A book is made of paper.
- 11 Paper is made from wood.
- 12 We write a letter on a sheet of paper.
- 13 A cowboy lives in America.
- 14 We get milk from a cow.
- 15 A cow lives on a farm and eats grass.
- 16 A soldier salutes an officer.
- 17 You can draw a straight line with a ruler.
- 18 People drink tea from a cup.
- 19 A dog is a good friend to man.
- 20 An Englishman often has bacon and an egg for breakfast.

- When we refer to a person's occupation or profession we always use *a* or *an*:

He is a student.

His father is a doctor.

My brother is a captain in the army.

Van Gogh was a great artist.

- NOTE: *One* is a specific, definite singular number:

One swallow doesn't make a summer.

We have two daughters and one son.

Please put only one lump of sugar in my coffee.

exercise 2

Put in *a* or *an* before singular countable nouns.

- 1 ... sick child needs ... doctor.
- 2 Mr Brown is ... bus driver.
- 3 His son is ... pupil at ... school near here.
- 4 He wants to be ... engineer when he is ... man.
- 5 ... author is ... person who writes books.
- 6 My father is ... author.
- 7 Her brother is ... teacher in ... college.
- 8 Peter is studying to be ... architect.
- 9 ... little boy sometimes plays at being ... fireman.
- 10 George is ... mechanic in ... garage.
- 11 Mr Black works as ... printer on ... newspaper.
- 12 On ... bus we have ... driver and ... conductor.
- 13 His brother is ... musician in ... orchestra.
- 14 ... man who runs ... shop is ... shopkeeper.
- 15 ... little boy often wants to be ... policeman.
- 16 Mr Chop is ... butcher in ... shop in town.
- 17 ... jockey is ... man who rides ... racehorse.
- 18 ... girl sometimes goes to work as ... shop assistant.
- 19 Miss Brown is ... secretary in ... large firm.
- 20 ... tailor can make ... suit or ... pair of trousers.

exercise 3

Turn the plural countable nouns into singular countable nouns. Remember to put in *a* or *an* and change the verb from plural to singular when necessary.

- 1 I have apples and oranges in my bag.
- 2 Policemen are sometimes very tall fellows.
- 3 Mothers look after little children.
- 4 Houses often have pretty gardens.
- 5 Schoolboys like holidays.
- 6 We write with pens and pencils.
- 7 Rivers run into the sea.
- 8 We need pens and ink to write letters.
- 9 Tables are articles of furniture.
- 10 Children are sons or daughters.
- 11 Weeks are periods of seven days.
- 12 Cats catch mice.
- 13 Dogs chase cats.
- 14 Apples grow on trees.
- 15 Men in white coats are doctors.
- 16 We can go to America on ships or aeroplanes.
- 17 Boys and girls go to the same school.
- 18 Horses and donkeys both work hard.
- 19 Onions and potatoes make a good salad.
- 20 Cherry trees and plum trees are beautiful in spring:

Definite article:

the

- *Countable nouns* in the singular form take *a* or *an* before them to show they are
 - (a) singular, and
 - (b) undefined.
- Plural countable nouns drop the *a* or *an*, also to show that they are undefined.
- When nouns, either countable or uncountable, singular or plural, are defined as particular specimens or groups of their kind, we put *the* before them. Students must be careful not to put *the* before uncountable and abstract nouns particularly, except when they are clearly defined in the sentence. Consider:

Health is wealth.

Silence is golden.

Time is money.

but

The health of the nation is good.

The silence in the forest is very restful.

The time we spend on our exercise isn't wasted.

- We often begin a conversation by talking of an undefined thing or person:

There is an old man in our garden.

We then continue, talking of *the* old man, who is now defined as the same old man as the one we spoke about in our first sentence:

Look! The old man is coming to the front door.

- NOTE: Works of art and historical regions often take *the*:

the Holy Land

the Acropolis

the Eiffel Tower

the Louvre

the Mona Lisa

the Fifth Symphony

the Houses of Parliament

exercise 4

Put *the* in the blanks, only where necessary.

- 1 ... horses have four legs and ... long tails.
- 2 Write your name at ... top of ... paper.
- 3 ... sugar is sweet and ... coffee is bitter.
- 4 ... health is more than ... gold.
- 5 ... little girl in blue is Mary.
- 6 Bakers use ... flour for making ... bread.
- 7 ... second letter of the alphabet is B.
- 8 ... apples grow on ... apple trees and ... pears grow on ... pear trees.
- 9 I remember ... day we went to ... seaside.
- 10 ... water was cold but ... sand was warm.
- 11 ... sun was in ... sky nearly all ... time.
- 12 People make omelettes with ... eggs.
- 13 ... wealth is not always ... happiness.
- 14 ... man on the left of ... picture is Mr Green.
- 15 I shall always remember ... kindness of those people.
- 16 ... money makes ... money, people say.
- 17 Where do horses sleep at ... night?
- 18 ... horses sleep in stables at night.
- 19 ... hunger is the best sauce.
- 20 ... food and ... drink are necessary to life.

DEFINITE ARTICLE:
THE

- All geographical names for natural waters and canals take *the*. Only the names of lakes do not take *the* before them:
the Red Sea, the Pacific Ocean, the English Channel, the Suez Canal, the Dardanelles.
but
Lake Como, Lake Superior, Lake Windermere.
- Chains of hills and mountains take *the* before them. Individual hills and mountains usually do not take the defining adjective:
the Andes, the Vosges, the Himalayas.
but
Mt. Everest, Mt. Blanc, Mt. Kilimanjaro.
There are a few exceptions to this:
the Jungfrau, the Matterhorn, the Mount of Olives.
are the most common.
- Single islands do not take *the* but groups do.
Trinidad, the Hebrides.
- The geographical names of countries do not take the defining adjective, nor do the names of towns and continents. Exceptions are:
the Hague, the Netherlands, the Congo, the Sudan, the Crimea, the Ukraine.
- The political titles of countries always take the definite article. Thus we have:
France (geographical), the Republic of France (political), America (geographical), the United States of America (political), Russia (geographical), the U.S.S.R. (political), Great Britain (geographical), the United Kingdom (political).

exercise 5

Put in *the* only where it is necessary.

- 1 ... English Channel lies between ... France and ... England.
- 2 ... Suez Canal joins ... Mediterranean Sea and ... Red Sea.
- 3 ... Danube is the longest river in ... Europe.
- 4 ... Mt. Blanc is in ... Swiss Alps.
- 5 ... London is on ... Thames.
- 6 ... Hague is ... capital of ... Holland.
- 7 ... Netherlands is another name for ... Holland.
- 8 Ships can go from ... Atlantic to ... Pacific through ... Panama Canal.
- 9 ... Canada and ... Alaska are in ... North America.
- 10 Which is the capital of ... United States, ... Washington or ... New York?
- 11 ... Andes are high mountains in ... South America.
- 12 ... Elbe is one of ... Germany's most important rivers.
- 13 The highest mountain in the world is ... Mt. Everest in ... Himalayas.
- 14 ... India and ... Pakistan are both in Asia.
- 15 ... Cyprus is a large island in ... Mediterranean.
- 16 We love boating on ... Lake Geneva in ... Switzerland.
- 17 ... Scotland is the northern part of ... Great Britain.
- 18 The languages of ... France, ... Italy and ... Spain are like one another.
- 19 Tea comes from ... India, ... Pakistan, ... Ceylon and ... China.
- 20 ... Barbados is one of ... Windward islands.

DEFINITE ARTICLE:
THE

- Cinemas, hotels, theatres, restaurants, clubs, taverns and public places all take the defining *the* except when their titles are proper personal names in the possessive case:

the Alhambra Cinema
the Royal Theatre
the Blue Danube Restaurant
the Astoria Hotel
the Conservative Club

but

Smith's Hotel
White's Club
Luigi's
Romano's
His Majesty's Theatre

- The names of ships always take *the* before them as do the names of special trains and aeroplanes:

the Queen Elizabeth
the Flying Scotsman
the Dutchman
the Blue Train
the Acropolis Express

- Directions (north, south, northeast, etc.,) take *the* when they are used as nouns.

- NOTE:

the sun, the moon, the earth, the sky, the stars, the winds,
the south wind, the northeast wind.

- Groups of stars and planets usually take *the*:

the Great Bear
the Milky Way
the Southern Cross

but

Orion's Belt

- Named stars and planets do not usually take *the*:

Betelgeuse

Mars

Venus

Jupiter

- Very few streets take *the* before them although roads often do when their names show where the road goes to or comes from:

Oxford Street is in London.

The Oxford road leads from London to Oxford.

- We do not usually put *the* before our ordinary meals:

breakfast

lunch

tea

dinner

The dinner is an organised event of an association or committee for a particular purpose:

We all went to the dinner organised by the Ladies' Club Committee.

- Note that when we write the date (22 January, 10 May, etc.) we say:

the twenty-second of January

the tenth of May

- There are a few instances when the omission of *the* makes a difference to the meaning of the sentence:

Jack goes to school (as a pupil). but His father goes to the school (to see the headmaster or for some other purpose).

My brother is in church (at a service). but My brother is in the Church (a priest or a minister, he is a clergyman).

We have a friend in hospital (as a patient). but We have a friend in the hospital (doctor, nurse, secretary).

exercise 6

Put in *the* only where it is necessary.

- 1 On 19th March I left . . . King George Hotel to cross . . . Atlantic on . . . Queen Mary.
- 2 Peter is having . . . lunch at . . . Red Rose, with John, to-day.
- 3 To-day . . . sun is very hot but . . . northeast wind cools the air.
- 4 . . . Sea Lion flew across the water with . . . southwest wind behind her.
- 5 I shall meet you at . . . Rialto Cinema in . . . Prince Road.
- 6 We are having . . . dinner at . . . Claridge's before going to . . . Adelphi theatre.
- 7 . . . moon and . . . stars are shining brightly tonight.
- 8 Shall we go to . . . Embassy Cinema or to . . . Green's Theatre?
- 9 My husband usually has . . . lunch at . . . Blue Pig.
- 10 . . . sky is red and . . . sun is just setting.
- 11 Peter is staying at . . . Smith's Hotel in . . . Greentree Avenue.
- 12 . . . S.S. Ocean Princess leaves . . . New York on 14th June.
- 13 . . . Sky Rocket flies from . . . London to . . . Rome in three hours.
- 14 The ten o'clock train for . . . north is . . . Flying Scotsman.
- 15 North of . . . equator we can see . . . Great Bear.
- 16 South of . . . equator we see . . . Southern Cross. (*north* and *south* are not nouns in these sentences).
- 17 We saw a good film at . . . Capitol and went back to our rooms at . . . Astoria.
- 18 John's Hotel is opposite . . . Royal Theatre in . . . Red Lion Street.
- 19 Shall we have coffee at . . . Brown Cow or beer at . . . Kellerman's?
- 20 . . . moon goes round . . . earth and it goes round . . . sun.

Summing up

- The indefinite article, *a* or *an*, is used before singular countable nouns when no particular person or thing is indicated.
- Plural countable nouns and uncountable nouns do not take *a* or *an*.
- The definite article, *the*, is used for singular and plural, countable and uncountable when nouns are defined.
- The following three groups of nouns may help you
 - (a) to remember that many nouns have several forms
 - (b) to understand their meanings.

singular countable nouns (undefined)	singular and plural countable nouns (defined)	abstract and uncountable nouns (undefined)
a man	the man, the men	man <i>mankind</i>
a youth	the youth, the youths	youth <i>it goes away</i>
an age	the age, the ages	age <i>and age comes</i>
a lemon	the lemon, the lemons	lemon <i>in your soup</i>
a fortune	the fortune, the fortunes	fortune <i>luck</i>
a work (of art)	the work, the works <i>factory</i>	work <i>labour, toil</i>
an onion	the onion, the onions	onion <i>not a whole one! a taste of onion, perhaps.</i>

● **NOTE:**

*The Queen Mary is a ship. Queen Mary is a queen.
He went to prison for stealing.
He went to the prison to visit someone.
We live at home with our parents.
Mr Brown lives at the home for Old Soldiers.*

Demonstratives:

this, these, that, those

- *This* and *that* are singular, *these* and *those* are plural.
This and *these* refer to things which are near to the speaker, perhaps even in his hand, while *that* and *those* refer to things at some distance from the speaker.
When we ask *what's this?* or *what's that?* the answer is usually *it's a . . .*. When we ask *what are these?* or *what are those?* the answer is usually *they're . . .*.
- *This* and *these* refer generally to things which are here, near the speaker or present in time. *This* and *these* refer to things, persons and times here and now.
- *That* and *those* refer to things, persons and times there and then.

one, ones

- An adjective cannot stand alone in English in place of a countable noun. It must be followed by a noun or a pronoun, either singular or plural. Generally *one* (singular) or *ones* (plural) stand for countable nouns. Consider:
Give me two large potatoes, or three small ones, please.
The small carrots are a penny each, and the large ones are twopence each.
Mary bought a green hat and Joan bought a blue one.
- Adjectives, of course, are often used predicatively:
The sky is blue.
This milk smells sour.