

4 a/an



a banana



an apple



an architect



a dentist

1 Form

We use *a* and *an* before different sounds:

	BEFORE WORDS THAT BEGIN WITH	EXAMPLES
a +	a consonant sound, e.g. <i>b, c, l, m, p, s, t</i>	<i>a cake, a sports teacher, a hat</i>
	<i>u</i> or <i>eu</i> , when they sound like <i>y</i>	<i>a uniform /uː/, a European /ʉə/ city</i>
an +	a vowel sound: <i>a, e, i, o, u</i>	<i>an apple, an interesting book, an uncle</i>
	<i>h</i> when you do not pronounce the <i>h</i>	<i>an hour, an honest man</i>



Pronunciation > 1.03

2 Use

We use *a/an*

to talk about one person or thing	<i>We saw a good film at the cinema on Saturday. Do you live in a house or a flat?</i>
to describe a person or thing with an adjective	<i>She's a nice person. Is that an interesting book?</i>
to talk about jobs	<i>My uncle is a dentist. I want to be an architect.</i>
to mean 'one' with fractions and numbers	<i>one and a half, a hundred, a thousand, a million</i>
to mean 'each' in measurements	<i>twice a day, once a month, four times a year, 80 kilometres an hour</i>



- ✗ ~~*My uncle is dentist.*~~
- ✓ *My uncle is a dentist.*

We DON'T use *a/an*

- before plural nouns:
*I like books about other countries.
Children are welcome in this restaurant.
Do you like adventure films?*
- before uncountable nouns:
*Do you take sugar?
Furniture is expensive these days.
Teenagers often listen to music.*