

Articles, demonstratives and quantifiers

Before you start

1 Review these intermediate grammar points and check you know them.

Articles

1 We use the indefinite article *a* before consonant sounds (*b, d, k, t, s*, etc.) and before *u/eu* when pronounced /j/: *a brainwave, a doctor, a university, a euphemism*

We use *an* before vowel sounds (*a, e, i, o, u*) and words that start with silent *h*:
an article, an engineer, an umbrella, an hour, an honest mistake, an R

- We use *a/an* with singular countable nouns: *a garage, an opinion*

- We use *a/an* to introduce a concept:

*They're building **a new block of luxury apartments** at the end of our street.*

- We use *a/an* to refer to something indefinite, i.e. any one of many, not a specific one:
*I'd love to live in **a luxury apartment** one day.*

2 We use the definite article *the* with singular countable nouns (*the garage*), plural nouns (*the latest computers*) and uncountable nouns (*the purest water*).

We can omit *the* with uncountable and plural nouns: *peace, efforts*

Quantifiers

1 Quantifiers are used before a noun to specify the amount or quantity.

They are words such as *some, any, much, many* and *a lot of*.

2 We use *some* and *any* for indefinite quantities, i.e. when we don't specify how much or how many of something. We usually use *some* in positive sentences, *any* in questions and negatives:

*I've got **some** money, so you don't need to bring your wallet.*

*'Have you got **any** coins for the meter?' 'Well, I've got **some** 10p and 20p coins, if that's OK.'*

*You've got **some** interesting ideas, but you haven't got **any** money to back them.*

3 We use *much* and *many* in questions and negatives, but we prefer to use *a lot of* in positive statements:

*'I haven't got **much** time. Can you hurry?'*

*'Don't hurry. I've got **a lot of** spare time today.'*

Demonstratives

1 We use the demonstratives *this/these* to refer to someone or something known or close to the speaker, and *that/those* for someone/something further away:

*'I think **these** shoes are lovely.' 'Really? I prefer **those** in the window.'*

2 Demonstratives can express closeness or distance in time as well as space:

	CLOSE	DISTANT
space	<i>Look at this MP3 player – it's tiny. I think these shoes are lovely.</i>	<i>Can I see that MP3 player on the top shelf? Look at those shoes at the back of the window.</i>
time	<i>What are you doing this weekend? These last two weeks have been difficult for me.</i>	<i>Do you remember that weekend in 2005? Those were the happiest years in my childhood.</i>