

DETERMINERS AND QUANTIFIERS

Determiners and quantifiers are little words that precede and modify nouns.

Example: *the student, a book, a little money, whatever purposes, a lot of trees*

Sometimes these words will tell the reader or listener whether we're referring to a specific or general thing and sometimes they tell how much or how many. The choice of the proper determiner, or quantifier to precede a noun or noun phrase is usually not a problem for English native writers, but for writers from other countries, especially Asian or Eastern European countries whose languages have no articles or different systems of choosing articles and determiners, this can be a considerable obstacle on the way to their mastery of English.

Determiners

* Determiners are words which come at the beginning of the noun phrase. They tell us whether the noun phrase is specific or general. Determiners are either **specific** or **general**.

* The **specific** determiners are:

- the definite article: *the*
- possessives: *my, your, his, her, its; our, their, whose*
- demonstratives: *this, that, these, those*
- interrogatives: *which*

* We use a specific determiner when we believe the **listener/reader knows** exactly what we are referring to.

Example:

Can you close **the** door please?

Look at **this** nice car..

Thank you very much for **your** letter.

Whose car is this?

* The **general** determiners are:

- indefinite article : *a, an*
- *any; another; other; what; whatever*

* When we are talking about things in general and the listener/reader does **not** know exactly what we are referring to, we can use a singular noun with the indefinite article **a** or **an**:

Example:

A woman was lifted to safety by **a helicopter**.

A man climbing nearby saw the accident.

or we can use a non-count noun or a plural noun with no determiner:

Example:

Milk is very good for you. (= uncount noun)

Health and **education** are very important. (= 2 uncount nouns)

Girls normally do better in school than **boys**. (= plural nouns with no determiner)

or we can use the general determiner **any** with a singular noun or a non-count noun when we are talking about **all** of those people or things:

Example:

It's very easy. **Any** child can do it. (= All children can do it)

With a full licence you are allowed to drive **any** car.

I like beef, lamb, pork - **any** meat.

* We use the general determiner **another** to talk about an **additional** person or thing. The **plural** form of **another** is **other**:

Example:

Would you like **another** glass of wine?

I spoke to John, Helen and a few **other** friends.

→Note that usually we cannot use more than one determiner in the same noun phrase.

Quantifiers

* Like determiners, **quantifiers** are words that precede and modify nouns. We use quantifiers when we want to give someone information about the number of something: how much or how many. Selecting the correct quantifier depends on our understanding the distinction between **Count and Non-Count Nouns**. For our purposes, we will choose the count noun (plural noun) books and the non-count noun dancing:

<i>Quantifiers which work with <u>count nouns</u>:</i>	<i>Quantifiers which work with <u>non-count nouns</u>:</i>	<i>Quantifiers which work with both <u>count and non-count nouns</u>:</i>
many books (a) few books several books a couple of books a number of books a majority of books	not much dancing (a) little dancing a bit of dancing a good deal of dancing a great deal of dancing no dancing a large amount of	all of the books/dancing none of some books/dancing most of the books/dancing enough books/dancing a lot of books/dancing lots of books/dancing plenty of books/dancing a lack of books/dancing

* In formal academic writing, it is usually better to use **many** and **much** rather than phrases such as **a lot of**, **lots of** and **plenty of**.

* There is an important difference between "**a little**" and "**little**" (used with non-count words) and between "**a few**" and "**few**" (used with count words).

A few (for countable nouns) and **a little** (for uncountable nouns) describe the quantity in a **positive** way:

Example:

"I've got **a few** friends" (= maybe not many, but enough)

"I've got **a little** money" (= I've got enough to live on)

Few and **little** describe the quantity in a **negative** way:

Example:

Few people visited him in hospital (= he had almost no visitors)

He had **little** money (= almost no money)

* Unless it is combined with *of*, the quantifier "**much**" is reserved for questions and negative statements:

Example:

Much of the snow has already melted.

How much snow fell yesterday?

Not much.

* Note that the quantifier "**most of the**" must include the definite article *the* when it modifies a specific noun, whether it's a count or a non-count noun: "most of the instructors at this college have a doctorate"; "most of the water has evaporated." However, with a general plural noun (when you are *not* referring to a specific entity), the "of the" is dropped:

Example:

Most colleges have their own admissions policy.

Exercises

Directions: Fill in the blank with the appropriate article, *a*, *an*, or *the*, or leave the space blank if no article is needed.

1. I want apple from that basket.
2. Miss Lin speaks Chinese.
3. I borrowed pencil from your pile of pencils and pens.
4. One of the students said, "..... professor is late today."
5. Eli likes to play volleyball.
6. I bought umbrella to go out in the rain.
7. My daughter is learning to play violin at her school.
8. Is your mother working in old office building?

Directions: Provide the correct article in each blank space or indicate that no article is appropriate.

Soccer — or football (or *foosball* or *futbol*), as it is called by rest of world outside United States — is surely most popular sport in the world. Every four years, the world championship of soccer, World Cup, is watched by literally billions all over the world, beating out the United States professional football's Superbowl by far. It is estimated that 1.5 billion people watched the World Cup final between Italy and Brazil in 1994. And it is also genuine world championship, involving teams from many countries (as many as 172) and played in venues all over globe, unlike much more parochial and misnamed World Series in American baseball (that doesn't even involve Japan or Cuba, two baseball hotbeds). But although soccer has become important sport in American sports scene, it will never make inroads into hearts and markets of American sports the way that football, basketball, hockey, baseball, and even tennis and golf have done. There are many reasons for this.

Recently New England Revolution beat Tampa Bay Mutiny in game played during horrid rainstorm. Nearly 5000 fans showed up, which shows that soccer is, indeed, popular in the United States. However, the story of game was buried near back of newspaper's sports section, and there was certainly no television coverage. In fact, biggest reason for soccer's failure as mass appeal sport in the United States is that it doesn't conform easily to demands of television.

Basketball succeeds enormously in America because it regularly schedules what it calls "television time-outs" as well as the time-outs that teams themselves call to re-group, not to mention half-times and, on the professional level, quarter breaks. Those time-outs in the action are

ideally made for television commercials. And [] television coverage is [] lifeblood of [] American sports. College basketball lives for [] game scheduled on [] CBS or ESPN (highly recruited high school players are more likely to go to [] team that regularly gets [] national television exposure), and we could even say that [] television coverage has dictated [] pace and feel of American football. Anyone who has attended [] live football game knows how commercial time-outs slow the game and sometimes, at its most exciting moments, disrupt [] flow of events. No one raises [] objection, however, because without [] television, football knows that it simply wouldn't remain in [] homes and hearts of Americans. Also, without those advertising dollars, the teams couldn't afford [] sky-high salaries of their high-priced superstars.

Directions: In the following sentences, fill in the gaps with one of the following quantifiers:
A FEW | A GREAT DEAL | A LITTLE | A LOT | A LOT OF | A MAJORITY OF | ENOUGH | MANY | MUCH OF | PLENTY | SEVERAL OF | SOME
When you've gotten all the answers right, see if you can substitute other quantifiers from the list.

1. I'm having..... of trouble passing my driving exam.
2. the movies were rated PG.
3.information proved to be outdated.
4. We're close to the project deadline, but there is still time left.
5. We still havefood left in the fridge, so we don't need to go to Walmart today.
6. Although of the lawn is open to the sun, there areof shade trees to make it comfortable.