

Universidad de Los Andes
Facultad de Humanidades y Educación
Escuela de Idiomas Modernos

Practicing Article Usage

EXERCISE 1. In these dialogues, decide whether the speakers would probably use **a**, **an** or **the**.

1. A: I have an idea. Let's go on a picnic Saturday.
B: Okay.

2. A: Did you have fun at the picnic yesterday?
B: Sure did. And you?

3. A: You'd better have _____ good reason for being late!
B: I do.

4. A: Did you think _____ reason Mike gave for being late was believable?
B: Not really.

5. A: Where's my blue shirt?
B: It's in _____ washing machine.
A: That's okay. I can wear _____ different shirt.

6. A: I wish we had _____ washing machine.
B: So do I. It would make it a lot easier to do our laundry.

7. A: Can you repair my car for me?
B: What's wrong with it?
A: _____ radiator has _____ leak, and one of _____ windshield wipers doesn't work.
B: Can you show me where _____ leak is?

8. A: What happened to your bicycle? _____ front wheel is bent.
B: I ran into _____ parked car when I swerved to avoid _____ big pothole in the street.
A: Did you damage _____ car?
B: A little.

A: What did you do?

B: I left _____ note for _____ owner of _____ car.

A: What did you write on _____ note?

B: My name and address. I also wrote _____ apology.

9. A: Have you seen my boots?

B: They're in _____ closet in _____ front hallway.

EXERCISE 2. Complete the sentences with **a, an, the, or Ø** (zero article). Capitalize where necessary.

1. Ø Beef is a kind of Ø meat.
2. **The** beef we had for dinner last night was excellent.
3. Jim is wearing a straw hat today.
4. Jim likes to wear _____ hats.
5. _____ hat is _____ article of clothing.
6. _____ hats are _____ articles of clothing.
7. _____ brown hat on that hook over there belongs to Mark.
8. Everyone has _____ problems in _____ life.
9. My grandfather had _____ long life.
10. That book is about _____ life of Helen Keller.
11. Tommy wants to be _____ engineer when he grows up.
12. The Brooklyn Bridge was designed by _____ engineer.
13. John Roebling is _____ name of _____ engineer who designed the Brooklyn Bridge. He died in 1869 from _____ infection before _____ bridge was completed.
14. _____ people wear _____ jewelry to make themselves more attractive.
15. _____ jewelry Diana is wearing today is beautiful.

EXERCISE 3. Complete the sentences with **a, an, the, or Ø** (zero article). Capitalize where necessary.

1. We need to get _____ new phone.
2. Alex, would you please answer _____ phone?
3. _____ people use _____ plants in many different ways. Plants supply us with oxygen. They are a source of _____ lifesaving medicines. We use plant products to build _____ houses and to make _____ paper and _____ textiles.
4. When you look at _____ sandy shore, it might seem practically empty of _____ animals. This appearance is deceptive, however. Beneath _____ surface, the sand is full of _____ life. It is teeming with _____ crabs, _____ shrimp, _____ worms, _____ snails, and _____ other kinds of _____ marine animals.
5. Our children enjoyed going to the beach yesterday. When they dug in _____ sand, they found various kinds of _____ animals. Susie found _____ crab, and so did Johnny. _____ crab Johnny found pinched him, which made him cry. But he had _____ good time at _____ beach anyway.
6. The biggest bird in the world is the ostrich. It eats just about anything it can reach, including _____ stones, _____ glass, and _____ keys. It can kill _____ person with one kick.
7. Do you ever gaze into _____ space and wonder if _____ other life forms exist in _____ universe?
8. _____ most mirrors are made from _____ glass to which _____ thin layer of _____ silver or _____ aluminum has been applied.
9. In _____ recent newspaper article, I read about _____ Australian swimmer who was saved from _____ shark by _____ group of dolphins. When _____ shark attacked _____ swimmer, _____ dolphins chased it away. They saved _____ swimmer's life.
10. I heard on the radio that there is _____ evidence that _____ dolphins suffer in captivity. Dolphins that are free in _____ nature live around 40 years. Captive dolphins live _____ average of 12 years. It is believed that some captive dolphins commit _____ suicide.
11. _____ phonograph records have become old-fashioned. They have been supplanted by _____ compact discs, which are commonly referred to as CDs.
12. Look. There's _____ fly walking on _____ ceiling. It's upside down. Do you suppose _____ fly was flying rightside up and flipped over at the last second, or was it flying upside down when it landed on _____ ceiling?