

2. Nouns and Determiners

HANDOUT

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- 2.1. Pre-determiners
- 2.2. Central determiners
- 2.3. Post Determiners
- 2.4. Number (+ partitive constructions)
- 2.5. Gender
- 2.6. Case
- 2.7. Definiteness

Nouns and Determiners

Pre-determiners

1. Answer the following questions:

What are the most frequently used pre-determiners? **All, both, half**

Why are they called pre-determiners? **They precede the central determiner**

2. Match the pre-determiners below with the types of nouns they can be used with.

Types of nouns: *singular count nouns, plural count nouns, non-count nouns*

All – **plural count nouns, non-count nouns**

Both – **plural count nouns**

Half – **singular count nouns, plural count nouns, non-count nouns**

3. Fill in “both, neither, nor” in the following sentences. Give reasons for your choice.

That’s enough! _____ you pay your debt to me or I take you to court.

When we heard the good news, we were _____ happy and excited.

They had _____ food to eat nor money to go to a restaurant.

Mr. Harrison wants to have _____ vanilla and chocolate in his ice-cream.

You should stop making up excuses. _____ you study hard or you’ll fail in the Maths exam tomorrow.

_____ of the students had books with them so the teacher got very angry.

We have _____ bread nor cheese so we can’t make a cheese sandwich.

I like _____ the green and the blue t-shirt, but I don’t have enough money to buy two t-shirts.

The sports car _____ nice and cheap so my father decided to buy it.

My baby sister likes _____ soup nor spinach. She just likes milk.

We have some flour and eggs. We can _____ make an omelette or pancake.

If you want to lose weight, you should _____ do exercises and go on a diet.

You can _____ grow corn or wheat here in this season.

_____ of the two friends knew how to go to the museum, so they asked the way to a policeman.

- 1. That’s enough! **Either** you pay your debt to me or I take you to court.
- 2. When we heard the good news, we were **both** happy and excited.
- 3. They had **neither** food to eat nor money to go to a restaurant.
- 4. Mr. Harrison wants to have **both** vanilla and chocolate in his ice-cream.
- 5. You should stop making up excuses. **Either** you study hard or you will fail in the Maths exam tomorrow.
- 6. **Neither** of the two students had books with them so the teacher got very angry.
- 7. We have **neither** bread nor cheese so we can’t make a cheese sandwich.
- 8. She can **either** buy a laptop or a tablet pc. She has got enough money.

9. I like **both** the green and the blue t-shirt, but I don't have enough money to buy two t-shirts.
10. The sports car was **both** nice and cheap so my father decided to buy it.
11. My baby sister likes **neither** soup nor spinach. She just likes milk.
12. We have some flour and eggs. We can **either** make an omelette or a pancake.
13. If you want to lose weight, you should **both** do exercises and go on a diet.
14. You can **either** grow corn or wheat here in this season.
15. **Neither** of the two friends knew how to go to the museum so they asked the way to a policeman.

Central determiner

4. Look at the following examples. Give reasons for using the definite article, the indefinite article, the zero article or a pronoun. This exercise is guided by the student's grammar of English Language by Greenbaum and Quirk.

Oh, dear! *The stain* hasn't come out of the carpet.

I do most of my travelling by overnight train and, of course, in *the dark*, one has no idea of what *the countryside* looks like.

You'll probably see it in *the paper* tomorrow.

I grabbed him by *the arm*.

How is *the chest* now? Has the breathing been affected?

She was *the sole* survivor.

Her house was burgled and she lost *a camera*, *a radio* and *a purse* – though fortunately *the purse* contained very little money and *the camera* was insured.

Jack has broken *a finger*. Jack has bumped *his head*.

This cost *a hundred* pounds.

As *(the) chairman*, I must rule you out of order.

θ Prime Minister Ghandi – the Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Ghandi.

Travel by bus.

What time do you normally have *θ breakfast*? *The breakfast* was served late that day.

The car became an increasing necessity in the 20th century.

θ Research is vital for human progress.

A tiger / tigers run more gracefully than most animals.

Do you remember when everyone was keen on *the rhumba*?

The Welsh are fond of singing.

There's *a Richmond* in the south of England.

Every large city should have *a Hyde Park*.

KEY: A Student's Grammar of the English Language, S. Greenbaum, R. Quirk, Longman 1990, pp 73 - 86

5. Look at the following oppositions in using the definite and the zero article. Explain the usage of the articles. English grammar in Use, p. 149, ex. 2

Every term parents are invited to the school to meet the teachers.

Why aren't your children at school today? Are they ill? When he was younger, Ted hated school.

My brother has always been very healthy. He's never been in hospital. When Ann was ill, I went to the hospital to visit her. When I was there I met Lisa who is a nurse the hospital.

The 2 (school / the school etc.)

Compare **school** and **the school**:



Ellie is ten years old. Every day she goes **to school**. She's **at school** now. **School** starts at 9 and finishes at 3.

We say a child goes **to school** or is **at school** (as a student). We are not thinking of a specific school. We are thinking of **school** as a general idea – children learning in a classroom.



Today Ellie's mother wants to speak to her daughter's teacher. So she has gone to **the school** to see her. She's at **the school** now.

Ellie's mother is not a student. She is not 'at school', she doesn't 'go to school'. If she wants to see Ellie's teacher, she goes to **the school** (=Ellie's school, a specific building).

We use **prison** (or **jail**), **hospital**, **university**, **college** and **church** in a similar way. We do not use **the** when we are thinking of the general idea of these places and what they are used for.

Compare:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ken's brother is in prison for robbery. (He is a prisoner. We are not thinking of a specific prison.) <input type="checkbox"/> Joe had an accident last week. He was taken to hospital. He's still in hospital now. (as a patient) <input type="checkbox"/> When I leave school, I plan to go to university / go to college. (as a student) <input type="checkbox"/> Sally's father goes to church every Sunday. (to take part in a religious service) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ken went to the prison to visit his brother. (He went as a visitor, not as a prisoner.) <input type="checkbox"/> Jane has gone to the hospital to visit Joe. She's at the hospital now. (as a visitor, not as a patient) <input type="checkbox"/> I went to the university to meet Professor Thomas. (as a visitor, not as a student) <input type="checkbox"/> Some workmen went to the church to repair the roof. (not for a religious service) |
|--|---|

With most other places, you need **the**. For example, **the station**, **the cinema**, (see Units 72C and 73C).

We say **go to bed** / **be in bed** etc. (*not* the bed):

- ☐ I'm going **to bed** now. Goodnight.
- ☐ Do you ever have breakfast **in bed**?

but ☐ I sat down on **the bed**. (a specific piece of furniture)

go to work / **be at work** / **start work** / **finish work** etc. (*not* the work):

- ☐ Chris didn't go to **work** yesterday.
- ☐ What time do you usually finish **work**?

go home / **come home** / **arrive home** / **get home** / **be at home** etc. :

- ☐ It's late. Let's go **home**.
- ☐ Will you be at **home** tomorrow afternoon?

We say **go to sea** / **be at sea** (without **the**) when the meaning is 'go/be on a voyage':

- ☐ Keith works on ships. He's **at sea** most of the time.

but ☐ I'd like to live near **the sea**.

- ☐ It can be dangerous to swim in **the sea**.

6.

49.1
2 ...no-one heard...
3 Not a drop...
4 ...no point...
5 ...nowhere else...
6 ...none of the hotels...
7 ...never going to get...
8 ...nothing wrong...

Post-determiners

7.

8. Contrast the sentence pairs. Give reasons for using the underlined determiners and quantifiers.

I called **a friend**. We'll ask **the friend** (that you called).

Ask **this friend**. / Go and ask **that friend**. He was *calling all night*. **This** angered them.

All friends want loyalty. **All your friends** called back. **Both parents** called back

Each friend called back. **Every friend** wants loyalty.

Some friends called back. / **Did any friends** called back?

Either friend will call back. / **Either of my friends** will call back.

Not one friend called back. / **Not all friends** call back.

Few/ A few friends called back.

We have **enough food**. / The food is good **enough**.

<https://www.grammar-quizzes.com/determiners.html>

Nouns – Number

9. Decide whether the plural „s“ in the following words is pronounced as /s/, /z/ or /iz/ (voicing)

Gas, watch, cough, bed, attack, sting, roof, stop, chance, blast, judge, dog,

KEY:

<http://www.focus.olsztyn.pl/en-grammar-nouns-pronunciation-plural.html>

<https://sharonsathome.wordpress.com/2013/05/16/pronunciation-s-z-iz/>

10. Make plural of the following words. Comment on the etymology of the plural endings.

Analysis - **analyses**, appendix – **appendixes / appendices**, axis - **axes**, cactus – (UK) – **cacti** / (US) - **cactuses**, criterion - **criteria**, datum - **data**, index – **indexes / indeces**, diagnosis - **diagnoses**, medium - **media**, octopus – **octopuses**, thesis - **theses**

11. Make plural of the following words (Vowel change – irregular plurals)

Foot, - **feet** louse - **lice**, mouse - **mice**, woman - **women**, goose - **geese**, man - **men**

12. Explain the difference in meaning of the following pairs:

Hair – hairs

Give 5 more examples of zero plural. Explain why the plural are called „zero“

Key:

<https://www.dailywritingtips.com/one-sheep-two-sheep-one-fish-two-fish/>

<https://www.quora.com/Is-the-word-sheeps-a-grammatically-correct-form-for-the-plural-of-the-collective-noun-Sheep>

<https://www.englishlci.edu/blog/english-grammar-lessons/did-you-know-that-these-words-have-no-plural/>

sheep, fish, deer, knowledge, furniture

13. Give 3 examples of ordinarily plural and 3 examples of ordinarily singular nouns

KEY: A Student's Grammar of the English Language, S. Greenbaum, R. Quirk, Longman 1990, pp. 97 - 99

Gender

In English, inanimate nouns are metaphorically assigned a gender. Mark the following groups either masculine, feminine or neutral (common). If more than one option is possible, mark the preferable one.

Vehicles

Computers, robots and tools

Nations

Earth

Animals and young children

Hurricanes

KEY:

<https://www.druide.com/en/reports/metaphorical-gender-english-feminine-boats-masculine-tools-and-neuter-animals>

Case

Transcribe the following genitive nouns

One cow's tail. /wʌn kaʊz teɪl/

All the cows' tails /ɔ:l ðə kaʊz teɪlz/

Socrates' doctrines /'sɒkrəti:z 'dɒk.trɪnz/

Moses laws /'məʊzɪz lɔ:z/

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/what-happens-to-names-when-we-make-them-plural-or-possessive>

Create the genitive of the following words:

The chief of staff (room)

Father (trousers)

House (front)

Annie and Mary (brother)

Students (subject)

Hotel (room)

Car (door)

KEY: <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/possessive-case/>

The meanings of the genitive can be conveniently shown through paraphrase. Traditionally, these types of meanings can be expressed by genitive:

- possessive genitive
- genitive of attribute
- partitive genitive
- subjective genitive
- objective genitive
- genitive of origin
- descriptive genitive

Match the following examples with one of types of genitive meaning above.

Children's shoes – the shoes are designed for children

Mr Johnson's coat – Mr Johnson owns this coat

The parents' consent – the parents consented

Mother's letter – the letter from mother

The victim's outstanding courage – The victim was very courageous

The prisoner's release – (...) released the prisoner

The heart's two ventricles – the heart contains two ventricles

KEY: A Student's Grammar of the English Language, S. Greenbaum, R. Quirk, Longman
1990, pp. 102 - 104

The grammatical status of the genitive. Decide whether in the following examples the genitive functions as a determiner, a modifier or an independent genitive:

The old's gentleman's son.

They attend a women's university in Kyoto.

Jennifer's is the only face I recognize here

She lives in quaint old shepherd's cottage.

My cousin's new briefcase.

KEY:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/student-assessment/smart-teaching-strategies/literacy/language-conventions/stage-3/spelling/spelling-singular-and-plural-nouns>

KEY: A Student's Grammar of the English Language, S. Greenbaum, R. Quirk, Longman
1990, pp. 105 - 107