

No.	Situation or guideline	A	An	The	None	Examples
1	Before a word that begins with a consonant sound (including "yoo" and "yuh" sounds)	X				cat, university
2	Before a word that begins with a vowel sound		X			ungulate, X-ray
3	Before a singular, countable noun	X	X			seed, tube, sample
4	Categories or types of things or people	X	X			a scientist, an enzyme
5	Non-specific things or people	X	X			a pipette tip, an applicator
6	Before plural nouns			X	X	cats, dogs
7	A generalized uncountable noun				X	water, air
8	A generalized abstract noun				X	knowledge, translation
9	Before a noun that is unknown to the reader (indefinite article)	X	X			
10	Before a noun that is known to the reader (definite article)			X		
11	Before a noun that is unique or superlative			X		the largest, the third most abundant
12	When there are other modifiers; possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, quantifiers, etc.				X	some, their, this
13	Generalizing with plural nouns				X	Cats are common pets.
14	To generalize singular countable nouns to mean every single one	X	X	X		The bat is a flying mammal. A scientist is curious about the world.
15	When discussing certain body parts or organs as a singular unit			X		the eye, the nose, the lung, the back
16	Proper names				X	Oxford University, Albert Einstein
17	Proper names with "of" in the name			X		University of Nebraska
18	Names of countries that contain Republic, Federation, or United, or are plural			X		The Philippines, the Republic of Korea
19	Academic subjects				X	Biochemistry
20	Categories of academic subjects			X		The biological sciences
21	Individual named mountains, lakes, bays				X	Mt. Blanc
22	Individual named mountain ranges, seas, oceans, rivers, geographical regions, or environments			X		The Alps, the beach, the countryside