

Determiners

Determiners are words that introduce nouns.

These are the different types:

- **Articles:** a, an, the
- **Demonstratives:** this, that, these, those
- **Possessive Adjectives:** my, your, her, his, our, its, their
- **Quantifiers:** a little, a few, many, much, a lot of, most, any, some, enough
- **Numbers:** one, five, forty
- **Distributives:** both, all, half, neither, either, every, each
- **Interrogatives:** what, which, whose

The grammar rules for determiners are that they:

- Always come before a noun
- Come before any modifiers (e.g. adjectives) used before the noun
- Are required before a singular noun
- Are optional before plural nouns

Here are some examples of determiners used with the noun '*house*':

Type of Determiner	Example Determiner	Noun
Articles	The	house
Demonstratives	These	houses
Possessive Adjectives	Our	house
Quantifiers	A lot of	houses
Numbers	Twenty	houses
Distributives	Both	houses
Interrogatives	Which	house?

Determiners are commonly used as part of noun phrases, which will also include a modifier (an adjective, another noun, a possessive form, or an adverb-adjective combination).

Here are some examples of **noun phrases** that consist of:

- **determiner + modifier + noun**

Type of Determiner	Example Determiner	Modifier	Noun
Articles	The	old	house
Demonstratives	These	rich	people
Possessive Adjectives	Our	uncle's	car
Quantifiers	A lot of	excited	children
Numbers	Twenty	brick	buildings
Distributives	Both	black	kettles
Interrogative	Which	new	restaurant?

Examples of Determiners

Here are some more examples of determiners with nouns in sentences. The determiner is in red and the noun is in bold. Note the modifiers separating them in certain cases:

Articles

Articles can be definite articles (*the*) or indefinite (*a* or *an*). *The* is used when the speaker thinks that the listener already knows what is being referred to. Otherwise *a* (before consonants) or *an* (before vowels) is used.

There are many rules though around articles which need to be studied carefully.

- She took **a** significant **amount of time** to learn English
- I bought **a** nice **present** for my uncle
- There's **an** **otter** over there
- **The** **beaches** in Goa are beautiful
- I'll give you **an** **example** of **the** **essay question**

Demonstratives

Demonstrative determiners are used to identify or point to a particular person, event, or object. *This* and *that* are singular. *These* and *those* are plural.

- I like **this** kind of **biscuit**
- Why don't you buy **that** **book** instead of **this one**?
- **Those** **children** outside are being too noisy for **this** **time** of night
- I'll take **these** **pills** for my back ache later

Possessive Adjectives

Possessive adjective determiners function as adjectives rather than pronouns. As they are adjectives, they appear before the noun that they are modifying.

- Do you like **my** new **dress**?
- I prefer **my uniform** to **yours** (i.e. **your uniform**)
- Take **your phone** out of **your pocket**
- I really respect **her** controversial **views** on abortion
- **His** old **motorbike** is a classic
- Let's let them use **our house** for **their wedding reception**
- The dog has eaten **its food**

Quantifiers

Quantifiers provide approximate or specific answers to the questions "How many?" and "How much?"

- I only take **a little** bit of **milk** with my tea
- Quite **a few** **people** should be coming to the party
- I didn't take **many** **holidays** last year
- I haven't brought **much** **money** with me
- Do you think **a lot of** **people** believe what he says?
- **Most** **students** work hard to pass their exams
- Have you got **any** **proof** that he committed the crime?
- It takes **some** **effort** for me to do exercise
- Do we have **enough** **rice** to last the week?

Numbers

Numbers are either cardinal (one, two, three, etc.), which are adjectives referring to quantity, or ordinal (first, second, third, etc.) referring to distribution.

- **Two cars** are enough for most families
- There are about **twenty-five people** in my office
- It's my **fortieth birthday** next week
- That is the **second time** you've done that!

Distributives

Distributive determiners are used to refer to a group or individual members of the group. They reveal more about how people or things are distributed, shared, or divided.

- **Both countries** need to discuss the issues and find a solution
- **All** pet **dogs** need plenty of attention
- **Half** the **people** decided not to vote
- **Neither house** is suitable for our needs
- We can eat at **either 7pm** or **8pm**

Interrogatives

Interrogatives are used to ask questions. *Which* as a determiner is used to ask about a specific group of people or things.

What as a determiner is used when we are asking a general question. *Whose* is used to ask a question about possession.

- **Which restaurant** did you like best?
- **What time** will you come?
- **Whose pencil** is this?

Determiners of Quantity :

Many is used only with plural nouns and to show a large number.

Much is used with uncountable nouns indicating a large quantity.

Some and **any** show not a very large quantity.

Some is used in affirmative sentences.

Eg : There are *some* books in the bag.

Any is used in interrogative or negative sentences.

Eg : Are there *any* children in the park ?

There aren't *any* children in the park.

Each and **every** indicate single units in a group.

Each refers to individual members of a small group, while **every** to members of a large group.

Eg : We can help *each* other.

Every student wants to participate in the quiz show.

All is used to indicate the whole group rather than its components.

Eg : All the children in this building like to play.

Few means not many (hardly any). Negative in sense.

A few means not but at least some number. Positive in sense.

The few means very small specific numbers. It gives both positive and negative sense.

Eg. Few students are interested in reading books (hardly any).

A few students are good at Mathematics (atleast some).

The few students who scored good marks (very few are good, all scored good marks).

Similarly, little, **a little** and **the little** denote quantity.

He had *little* milk. (Not much, negative)

He had *a little* milk. (Some at least)

He drank *the little* milk I had. (Implies negative and affirmative)