

LESSON 123

672 Use of the indefinite articles: “a” and “an” (continued)

The indefinite article “a” (or “an”) is used when we use a noun for the first time. If we then refer to the same thing or person again, we normally use the definite article “the”. For example, “Yesterday, I received a letter and an email. I haven’t read the letter yet, but I have read the email”.

When we use a noun for the first time in a conversation, do we use the article “a” or “the”?

When we use ..., we use the article “a”

Give me an example, please.

Hi Jessica. I’ve just bought a new computer, and a printer too!

If we then refer to the same thing or person again, do we normally use “a” or “the”?

If we then refer ..., we normally use “the”

Give me an example, please.

Hi Jessica. I’ve just bought a new computer, and a printer too! The computer is really good but I’m not sure about the printer; it was very cheap.

We sometimes use the definite article “the” when we use a noun for the first time, but only when the speaker and the listener both know who or what is being talked about. For example, “Ah, Doctor Jones. Good morning. The woman who phoned yesterday has arrived for her appointment.” Here, it is clear which woman we are talking about – the woman who phoned yesterday.

In which situation do we use the definite article “the” when we use a noun for the first time?

We use the definite article “the” ...

only when the speaker and the listener both know who or what is being talked about

Give me an example, please.

The book which is on the table is yours

673 **Another use of the indefinite article “a” is when we talk about people’s jobs. For example, we say “She wants to become a doctor”, or “He works as a waiter”.**

Do we use the indefinite article when we talk about people's jobs?

Yes, we use ...

Would you like to be a teacher?

Yes, I'd like ...

~ No, I wouldn't like ...

Do you know anyone who works as a waiter?

Yes, I know someone ...

~ No, I don't know anyone ...

note note down take notes notebook

banknote key keyboard

Do you note down all the new English words you hear?

Yes, I note

down ... ~ No, I don't note down ...

Do you take notes in a notebook during the lesson?

No, I don't take ...

Why not?

Because if I did, I couldn't give my full attention to what was being said

Do you note anything different about this room from last lesson?

Yes, I note something ...

~ No, I don't note anything ...

What colour are the banknotes of your country?

The banknotes of my country are ...

Can women normally sing higher notes than men can?

Yes, women can ...

Does each key on a piano keyboard play a different note?

Yes, each key ...

674 What's the difference between a note and a letter?

The difference ... is that a note is normally shorter than a letter and less formal

armour

Why did soldiers wear armour in the old days?

Soldiers wore ... to protect themselves in battle

spread

How can we prevent a fire from spreading?

We can prevent ... by making everything around it wet

all over

Do you think people are basically the same all over the world?

Yes, I think **people** ... ~ No, I don't think **people** ...

fascinated

Have you ever visited a particular part of the world simply because you were fascinated by the local culture?

Yes, I've ... ~ No, I've never ...

scene

murderer

evidence

Why do you think murderers sometimes return to the scene of their crime?

I think **murderers** ... because they think that they may have left **some evidence** there

675 Can a court find someone guilty of a crime if there is no evidence?

No, a court can't ...

i.e. = id est = that is

The letters "i.e." are the abbreviation of "id est", which is Latin for "that is". We use this abbreviation mainly in writing.

What are the letters "i.e." the abbreviation of?

The letters "i.e." are the abbreviation of "id est" ... "that is"

When do we use this abbreviation?

We use this abbreviation mainly in writing

Be used to something

Get used to something

at first

accustomed

Instead of saying "I played football regularly at school", we can use the auxiliary "used to" and say "I used to play football at school". This sentence expresses a habit or repeated action in the past.

However, we have another, completely different, "used to" in English. In the sentence "I am used to hot weather", the word "used" is an adjective, followed by the preposition "to". If we say that we are "used to" something, it means that it is not strange or uncomfortable for us

anymore because we have experience of it. If a person from a cold country goes to live in a hot country, at first they feel uncomfortable; they "are not used to" the weather. Then, they slowly become accustomed to the weather, or "get used to" the weather. Finally, one day they say "I am used to hot weather" because now they are comfortable with it.

What does it mean if we say that we are used to something?

If we say that ..., it means that it is not strange or uncomfortable for us anymore because we have experience of it

676 Give me an example, please.

He's lived on that busy street for many years, so he is used to the traffic noise

Is an African person used to hot weather?

Yes, an African person is used to hot weather

Why?

Because it is hot in Africa, and if someone is born and brought up there, hot weather is normal for them

When a family moves to a new town, do you think it's easier for the children to get used to everything than it is for the parents?

Yes, when a family moves ..., I think ...
~ No, when a family moves ..., I don't think ...

Notice that, because the word "to" is a preposition, we put the gerund ("-ing" form) after the expression "to be used to", not the infinitive. For example, we say "I am getting used to waking up early".

Why do we put the gerund after the expression "to be used to"?

We put ... because the word "to" is a preposition

Give me an example, please.

At first it was difficult, but now I'm used to getting up early

Are you used to studying with the Callan Method?

Yes, I'm used to studying ... ~ No, I'm not used to studying ...

Do you think you could ever get used to living in a country where your language wasn't spoken?

Yes, I think I could ...
~ No, I don't think I could ever ...

Idiom 24

pull yourself together = gain control of yourself and your emotions after a difficult experience

e.g. He fell to pieces when his girlfriend left him, and it took him a few weeks to pull himself together again.

677 What does the idiom "pull yourself together" mean?

The idiom ...
"gain control of ..."

Give me an example, please.

Stop crying and
pull yourself together!



Dictation 82

I should really do the work now, / otherwise, I'll have twice as much / to do later on. /
I've seen that film / on several occasions, / but never on the big screen. / Whatever
else happens during the day, / I always keep to a set time / for getting up, / eating
and going to bed, / and so I always feel healthy. / In a civilized society, / people show
respect to others. / It is said / that one should always practise / what one preaches.