

The (1)

A

We use **the** . . . when there is only one of something:

- What is the longest river in **the** world? (There is only one longest river.)
- The earth goes around **the** sun, and **the** moon goes around **the** earth.
- I'm going away at **the** end of this month.

Don't forget **the**:

- Paris is **the** capital of France. (*not* Paris is capital of)

But we use **a/an** to say what kind of thing something is (see Unit 68C). Compare **the** and **a**:

- **The** sun is a star. (= one of many stars)
- **The** hotel we stayed at was a very nice hotel.

B

We say **the** sky / **the** sea / **the** ocean / **the** ground / **the** country / **the** environment:

- We looked up at all the stars in **the** sky. (*not* in sky)
- Would you like to live in **the** country? (= not in a city)
- We must do more to protect **the** environment. (= the natural world around us)

Note that we say **space** (without **the**) when we mean "space in the universe":

- There are millions of stars in **space**. (*not* in **the** space)

but ■ I tried to park my car, but **the** space was too small.

C

We use **the** before **same** (= **the** same):

- Your sweater is **the** same color as mine. (*not* is same color)
- These two pictures are **the** same. (*not* are same)

D

We say (go to) **the** movies / **the** theater:

- I often go to **the** movies, but I haven't been to **the** theater for ages.

We usually say **the** radio, but television (*without* **the**):

- I often listen to **the** radio.
- We heard the news on **the** radio.
- I often watch television.
- We watched the news on television.

but ■ Can you turn off **the** television, please? (= the television set)

Compare **a**:

- There isn't **a** theater in this town.
- I'm going to buy a new radio / television (= television set).

E

Breakfast lunch dinner

We do not normally use **the** with the names of meals (**breakfast/lunch**, etc.):

- What did you have for **breakfast**?
- We had **lunch** at a very nice restaurant.
- What time is **dinner**?

But we use **a** if there is an adjective before **breakfast/lunch**, etc.:

- We had a very nice **lunch**. (*not* we had very nice lunch)

F

Room 126, Gate 10, etc.

We do not use **the** before *noun + number*. For example, we say:

- Our plane leaves from **Gate 10**. (*not* the Gate 10)
- (*in a store*) Do you have these shoes in **size 11**? (*not* the size 11)

In the same way, we say **Room 126** (in a hotel), **page 29** (of a book), **Section A**, etc.

Exercises

70.1 Put in *the* or *a/an* where necessary. If no word is necessary, leave the space empty (-).

- A: Where did you have _____ lunch? B: We went to a restaurant.
- A: Where's _____ nearest drugstore? B: There's one on _____ next block.
- A: Do you often listen to _____ radio? B: No. In fact, I don't have _____ radio.
- A: Did you have _____ nice vacation?
B: Yes, it was _____ best vacation I've ever had.
- A: Would you like to travel in _____ outer space?
B: Yes, I'd love to go to _____ moon.
- A: Do you go to _____ movies very often?
B: No, not very often. But I watch a lot of movies on _____ television.
- A: It was _____ nice day yesterday, wasn't it?
B: Yes, it was beautiful. We went for a walk by _____ ocean.
- A: What did you have for _____ breakfast this morning?
B: Nothing. I never eat _____ breakfast.
- A: Can you tell me where _____ Room 225 is, please?
B: It's on _____ second floor.
- A: We spent all our money because we stayed at _____ most expensive hotel in town.
B: Why didn't you stay at _____ cheaper hotel?

70.2 Put in *the* where necessary. If you don't need *the*, leave the space empty (-).

- I haven't been to the movies for ages.
- I lay down on _____ ground and looked up at _____ sky.
- Sarah spends most of her free time watching _____ TV.
- _____ TV was on, but nobody was watching it.
- Have you had _____ dinner yet?
- Lisa and I arrived at _____ same time.
- You'll find _____ information you need at _____ top of _____ page 15.

70.3 Put in *the* or *a/an* where necessary. (See Unit 69 for *a/an* and *the*.)

- Sun is star. The sun, a star
- Moon goes around earth every 27 days. _____
- What is highest mountain in world? _____
- I'm fed up with doing same thing every day. _____
- It was very hot day. It was hottest day of year. _____
- I don't usually have lunch, but I always eat good breakfast. _____
- If you live in foreign country, you should try and learn language. _____
- Next train to San Diego leaves from Platform 8. _____

70.4 Complete the sentences using one of the following. Use *the* if necessary.

~~breakfast~~ dinner gate Gate 21 movies question 8 sea

- I didn't have time for breakfast this morning because I was in a hurry.
- "I'm going to _____ tonight." "Really? What are you going to see?"
- There was no wind, so _____ was very calm.
- "Are you going out this evening?" "Yes, after _____."
- The test wasn't too hard, but I couldn't answer _____.
- Oh, _____ is open. I must have forgotten to close it.
- (airport announcement) Flight 123 to Tokyo is now boarding at _____.