

To talk about a particular person or thing

The definite article **the** is used to talk about a particular person or thing.

- ✚ **The book** you want is out of print. (Which book? The one you want.)
- ✚ Let's go to **the park**. (Which park? May be the one in the town.)

The definite article **the** is also used to talk about a person or thing that has already been referred to.

- ✚ I saw a girl in the park. **The girl** was crying. (Which girl? The one I saw in the park.)

Before a singular noun meant to represent the whole class

When a singular noun is meant to represent a whole class to which it belongs, it is used with the definite article **the**.

- ✚ **The cow** is a useful animal. (Here the singular noun cow represents a whole class.)
- ✚ **The rose** is the sweetest of all flowers.
- ✚ **The spider** has eight legs.

Note that these sentences can also be written using a plural noun without any article.

- ✚ **Cows** are useful animals.
- ✚ **Roses** are the sweetest of all flowers.
- ✚ **Spiders** have eight legs.

Before the names of certain books

Examples are: The Vedas, The Illiad

Before superlative adjectives

The definite article **the** is used before superlative adjectives.

- ✚ She is **the best** person I have seen.
- ✚ Which is **the highest** mountain in the world?

Before ordinal numbers

- ✚ Who was **the first** woman to win a Nobel Prize?
- ✚ **The first** half of the film is more interesting than **the second** half.

Before musical instruments

- ✚ He can play **the flute**.

As an adverb with comparatives

- ✚ **The** more **the** merrier.
- ✚ **The** more they get, **the** more they want.
- ✚ **The** higher you climb, **the** cooler it gets.