Articles are short words placed before nouns. There are several articles primarily used in English: *a/an*, *the*, and *some*. Additionally, sometimes it’s correct to use *no article* at all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular Nouns</th>
<th>Plural Nouns</th>
<th>Noncount Nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>elephant</td>
<td>elephants</td>
<td>milk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A/An**
- I saw *a* baby elephant.
- I saw *an* elephant.

**[no article]/Some**
- I hang out with *elephants*.
- I hang out with *some* elephants.
- I drank *some* milk.

Create your own example:

**Specific**
- I saw *the* elephant with *the* red hat.

**The**
- I talked to *the* elephants that I met at *the* fair.

**The**
- I drank *the* milk that you left out for *the* elephants.

Create your own example:
Names of people usually don’t get articles.
Places, titles, and organizations, however, do.
I am not the Jamie Fine until I’m famous . . . but you may still celebrate the King of Pop.

Geographical features usually need the article ‘the’ unless they’re lakes or bays.
You visited the Mojave Desert, the Black Forest, and the Indian Ocean, but skipped [the] Lake George.

Mountain chains, island groups and other collections need articles, but single examples do not.
You hiked the Rockies, but avoided [the] Mount Everest and visited [the] Coney Island instead.

When using cardinal directions, add ‘the’ before the direction (or add -ern to the direction).
He visited Albany, in eastern New York, not Buffalo, which is in the west.

Use ‘the’ before things that are unique where there’s only one of them.
The world is huge, but the sky is bigger. The Internet tells me the climate is changing and the environment is affected by the travel industry.

NO articles are used with holidays, special days of the year, or days of the week, unless specificity is an essential element of the communication.
I’ll see you on Saturday. (NO article=next Saturday)
They came on a Saturday. (a=not emphasizing exact day)

Monuments, museums and institutions get articles unless they’re possessive.
She visited the Met, the Statue of Liberty and the Brooklyn Bridge, but skipped [the] Macy’s.

‘The’+ adjective (without a noun) is used to talk about groups of people.
Bring out the tired, the stressed, the weak and the weary—it’s midterm time!

Names of most countries, cities, and continents don’t get ‘the’ either, unless they’re plural.
You visited the Japan and flew from the NYC, stopping in the Antarctica along the way.

Periods of time always get ‘the’ before them.
The Renaissance, some argue, was more artistically productive than the Ice Age.

If the name of the country, city, and continent is plural, you need the article, THE.
You traveled to the Bahamas and the UAE from the USA.

Nouns that are both countable and uncountable use articles depending on the context.
Where’s my [no article] shampoo? I need a good shampoo! The shampoo is under the sink.

Exceptions: The Dominican Republic, The Czech Republic (when in doubt, do some research)

Note: See ‘Noncount/Count Nouns’ Handout