

A / an, the and zero article 3

A

With plural and uncountable nouns, **zero article** (i.e. no article) is used to talk generally, without definite people or things in mind. **The** is used when we assume the listener or reader will understand who or what we are referring to, or when other words in the noun phrase make the reference specific. Compare:

Reminder → 17–19

- The government has promised not to tax **books**. (= books generally) *and*
- The books** have arrived. (= the books you ordered)
- Music** played an important part in his life. (= music generally) *and*
- I thought **the music** used in the film was the best part. (= that particular music)

B

We often use **zero article** with the names of holidays, special times of the year, months, and days of the week including **Easter, Ramadan, New Year's Day**. But compare:

- I'll see you on **Saturday**. (= next Saturday)
- We met on **Saturday**. (= last Saturday)
- They came on a **Saturday** as far as I can remember. (we are only interested in the day of the week, not which particular Saturday)
- They came on **the Saturday** after our party. (a particular Saturday, specifying which one)

With **winter, summer, spring, autumn**, and **New Year** (meaning the holiday period), we can use either **zero article** or **the**:

- In **(the) summer** I try to spend as much time as I can in the garden.

We use **the** when it is understood or we go on to specify which summer, spring, etc. we mean:

- I'd like to go skiing in **the autumn**. (= this year)
- I first went skiing in **the spring** of 2002.

We say 'in the New Year' to mean near the beginning of next year:

- I'll see you again in **the New Year**.

When we want to describe the features of a particular holiday, season, or other period of time and say that it was somehow special when compared with others, we can use **It / That was ... + a / an + noun + modifying phrase**. Compare:

- That was **a** winter I'll never forget. (= compared to other winters it was unforgettable) *and*
- That was **the** winter we went to Norway. (= a statement about a particular winter)

C

We use **zero article** with times of the day and night such as **midnight, midday, and noon**:

- If possible, I'd like it finished by **midday**.
- Midnight** couldn't come quickly enough.

But note that we can say either **the dawn** or **dawn**:

- He got back into bed and waited for **(the) dawn**.

We use **the + morning / afternoon / evening** for a day which is understood or already specified:

- I enjoyed **the morning**, but in **the afternoon** the course was boring.

But compare:

- Morning** is the time I work best. (= mornings in general; **The morning ...** is also possible)
- I'll be there **by (the) morning / evening**. (*but ... by the afternoon, not ... by afternoon*)
- I waited **all morning**. (*more usual than all the morning / afternoon, etc.*)
- 'You look upset.' 'Yes, I've had **a** terrible **morning**.' (= compared to other mornings)

D

We often use **by + zero article** to talk about means of transport and communication. Compare:

- I generally go **by bus** to work. *and* I generally take **the bus** to work.

Also: go / travel by car / taxi / bus / plane / train / air / sea; contact / communicate by post / email / phone

471 Complete both sentences in each pair using one word from the box. Add **the** where necessary. **A**

agriculture children fire holidays islands money parents rain

- 1 a _____ as young as ten are working in the clothing industry.
b While you're painting the sitting room, I'll take _____ over to the park.
- 2 a As the soil quality deteriorated, so too did _____ on which the region depended.
b Around 60% of the labour force in the county is supported by _____.
- 3 a Around the world _____ are being threatened by rising sea levels.
b _____ off the east coast of Malaysia are beautiful.
- 4 a I've been really busy at work, so I'm really looking forward to _____.
b _____ in the Brazilian rainforests are now becoming popular with travellers.
- 5 a Farmers will be hoping for _____ in the next few weeks.
b Last night _____ was torrential.
- 6 a I've left _____ I owe you on your desk.
b It is said that _____ is the root of all evil.
- 7 a _____ will be able to use this software to check their child's use of the Internet.
b _____ of Paul Thomas claimed that he was at home at the time of the robbery.
- 8 a It isn't known how _____ started.
b Animals fear _____ more than anything else.

472 Complete the dialogues with **a / an, the** or **zero article (-)**, whichever is more likely. Where more than one answer is possible, consider any difference in meaning. **B & C**

- 1 A: What's the matter?
B: I've been working in the garden all _____ afternoon and my back aches.
- 2 A: Can you remember when we last saw Alex?
B: It was _____ Sunday in June, I think.
- 3 A: When did you get your laptop?
B: July 15th last year. I remember because it was also _____ day I passed my driving test.
- 4 A: I haven't seen Subin for months. B: He's been away in South Africa for _____ winter.
- 5 A: I've spent _____ afternoon on the phone to my mother. B: Why? Is there a problem?
- 6 A: Shall we go out walking on _____ Sunday? B: No, I'm busy this weekend.
- 7 A: Do you remember when Mateo did all the cooking?
B: Of course. It was _____ Christmas the rest of us had flu.
- 8 A: I'll see you again after _____ Christmas. B: Okay. Have a good holiday.
- 9 A: That old coat of yours won't be warm enough for _____ winter.
B: You're right. I need a new one.
- 10 A: Remember when Lars and Ella had that terrible row?
B: How could I forget? That was _____ day I wouldn't want to go through again.

473 Complete the sentences using the words from the box (more than once). Add any other necessary words. **D**

air car email post

- 1 A: I got _____ from Carla yesterday. B: How is she now?
- 2 The train was cancelled so I had to come _____.
- 3 Research has found that living plants are efficient at absorbing pollutants in _____.
- 4 The application forms came in _____ this morning.
- 5 The exam results will be sent _____ on 24th August.
- 6 It's raining so I think I'll take _____.
- 7 A: Shall I send Goran a letter? B: No, the quickest way to get in touch with him is _____.
- 8 Thailand – Getting there _____: The main international airport in Thailand is Suvarnabhumi Airport ...

A

Some

Reminder → 110–121

Before plural and uncountable nouns we sometimes use **some** or **zero article** (i.e. no article) with very little difference in meaning:

- 'Where were you last week?' 'I was visiting (**some**) friends.'
- Before serving, pour (**some**) yoghurt over the top.

With both **some** and **zero article** we are referring to particular people or things but in an indefinite way. When it is used in this way, **some** is usually pronounced /səm/.

We don't use **some** to make general statements about whole classes of things or people:

- Machinery** can be dangerous unless used properly.
- Babies** need a lot of attention.

B

Some is used before a number to mean 'approximately':

- Some** eighty per cent of all residents took part in the vote. (= approximately eighty per cent; beginning 'Eighty per cent ...' suggests a more precise figure)

When it is used in this way, **some** is usually pronounced /sʌm/.

C

When we can't say exactly which person or thing we are talking about because we don't know, can't remember, or want to emphasise that it is not important, we can use **some** instead of a / **an** with a singular noun. When it is used in this way, **some** is usually pronounced /sʌm/.

- He was interrupted twice by **some** troublemaker in the audience.

We use the phrase **some (thing) or other** in a similar way:

- I bought them from **some** shop **or other** in New Street. (*not ... from a shop or other ...*)

D

Any

We usually use **any** not **some** (and **anyone**, **anything**, etc. not **someone**, **something**, etc.) –

- ☆ in non-affirmative contexts; that is, lacking positive, affirmative meaning.
- ☆ to refer to non-specific, unspecified things.

For example, we generally use **any** in sentences with a negative meaning:

- There's *hardly* **any** sugar left.
- I closed the windows to *prevent* **any** flies getting in.
- It was *impossible* to see **anything** in the dark.
- We got to the airport *without* **any** difficulty.

Also when sentences include: barely, never, rarely, scarcely, seldom (= negative adverbs); **deny, fail, forbid, prohibit, refuse** (= negative verbs); **reluctant, unable, unlikely** (= negative adjectives)

However, we use **some** with these negative words–

- ☆ when **some** (pronounced /sʌm/) has the implication 'not all':
 - I talk to colleagues *before* I make **some** decisions, but I had to make this one on my own.
- ☆ when the basic meaning is positive:
 - Somebody** isn't telling the truth. (= There is some person [who isn't telling the truth])
- ☆ when we are talking about a particular but unspecified person or thing:
 - I was *reluctant* to repeat **something** so critical of Paul. (= a specific criticism)

E

We often use **any** in clauses that begin with **before**, and with comparisons:

- I cleared up the mess *before* **anyone** saw it. ('... before someone saw it' suggests that I have a particular person in mind who might see it)
- The material felt *softer than* **anything** she had ever touched before.

Exercises

48.1 If necessary, correct these sentences by writing **some** in an appropriate place or crossing it out. If the sentence is already correct, write ✓. **A & Reminder 110–114**

- 1 If you're going to the library, could you take back books that I've finished reading?
- 2 The price of some coffee is at an all-time low.
- 3 Tony knows more about some jazz than anyone I've ever met.
- 4 The door kept flying open in the wind so I tied it up with string.
- 5 Sports are dangerous.
- 6 I need to get some bread from the supermarket.
- 7 Money can't buy you some happiness.
- 8 Children are taller than expected at a given age.

48.2 Rewrite these news headlines as full sentences using **some** to mean 'approximately'. **B**

- 1 **250 people charged with assault following Molton riots**
Some 250 people have been charged with assault following the Molton riots.
- 2 **30% OF ALL CITY BUSES FOUND TO BE UNSAFE**
- 3 **Unexploded bomb found 5 miles from Newham centre**
- 4 **25% OF ELECTRICITY FROM WIND BY 2025**
- 5 **200 jobs to be lost at Encon steelworks**

48.3 Complete the sentences in any appropriate way using **some + singular noun** or **some + singular noun + or other**. **C**

- 1 I don't know where I got the information from. I must have heard it on some radio programme (or other).
- 2 I don't know where Jakub is. He's probably
- 3 I don't know where the book is. Maybe I lent it
- 4 I don't know where Zuzanna works. I think it's in
- 5 I don't know why Nika is still at work. Perhaps she's got to

48.4 Complete these sentences with **some, someone, something, any, anyone** or **anything**. Where both **some(one / thing)** or **any(one / thing)** are possible, write both and consider any difference in meaning. **D & E**

- 1 Elias worked hard at learning Japanese but failed to make real progress.
- 2 I was unable to eat of the food.
- 3 I always offer to help organise school concerts, but there is seldom for me to do.
- 4 Fiona Jones is I rarely see these days.
- 5 He denied that he had done wrong.
- 6 I always get to work before else.
- 7 The theatre is unlikely to have tickets left for tonight's performance.
- 8 Despite rowing as hard as we could, we had gone barely distance from the shore.
- 9 parents never seem to have time to sit down and talk to their children.
- 10 When I last lent my laptop out it got damaged, so I'm reluctant to lend it to else.

Inversion 1

A

In statements it is usual for the verb to follow the subject, but sometimes this word order is reversed. We can refer to this as *inversion*. There are two main types of inversion: when the verb comes before the subject (inversion is often optional), and when the auxiliary comes before the subject and the rest of the verb phrase follows the subject (inversion is usually necessary):

- Alex **stood** in the doorway. → In the doorway **stood** Alex. (*or ... Alex stood.*)
- I **had** rarely **seen** such a view. → Rarely **had** I **seen** such a view. (*not Rarely I had seen ...*)

Inversion brings about *fronting*, the re-ordering of information in a sentence to give emphasis in a particular place. Often this causes an element to be postponed until later in the sentence, focusing attention on it.

B

In conversation we use **Here comes** + noun and **There goes** + noun, with inversion of verb and subject, to talk about things and people moving towards or away from the speaker:

- Here comes** the bus.
- There goes** Per Alvin, the conductor.

Here comes ... is also used to say that something is going to happen soon, and **There goes** ... is used to talk about things (particularly money) being lost and to say that something (such as a phone or door bell) is ringing:

- Here comes** lunch.
- My bike's been stolen! **There goes** £100!
- There goes** the phone. Can you answer it?

We also put the verb before the subject when we use adverbs expressing direction of movement, such as **along**, **away**, **back**, **down**, **in**, **off**, **out**, **up** with verbs such as **come**, **fly**, **go**. This pattern is found particularly in narrative, to mark a change in events:

- The door opened and **in came** the doctor. (*less formally ... and the doctor came in.*)
- As soon as I let go of the string, **up went the balloon**, high into the sky. (*less formally ... the balloon went up ...*)

For more on inversion after adverbs of place and direction, see Unit 76A.

C

We can use clauses with inversion instead of certain kinds of **if-clause** (see Unit 83). Compare:

<input type="checkbox"/> It would be a serious setback, if the talks were to fail .	<input type="checkbox"/> It would be a serious setback, were the talks to fail .
<input type="checkbox"/> If you should need more information, please telephone our main office.	<input type="checkbox"/> Should you need more information, please telephone our main office.
<input type="checkbox"/> If Andy had asked , I would have been able to help.	<input type="checkbox"/> Had Andy asked , I would have been able to help.

The sentences with inversion are rather more formal than those with 'if'. Note that in negative clauses with inversion, we don't use contracted forms:

- Had the plane not been diverted**, they would have arrived early. (*not Hadn't the plane ...*)

D

In formal written language we commonly use inversion after **as** and **than** in comparisons:

- Paper was invented in China, **as was the process of printing**.
- Most young people did not vote in the election, **as was the case in 2010**.
- I believed, **as did my colleagues**, that the plan would work.
- Research shows that parents watch more television **than do their children**.

Note that we don't invert subject and verb after **as** or **than** when the subject is a pronoun:

- We now know a lot more about the universe **than we did** ten years ago. (*not ... than did we ten years ago.*)

Exercises

99.1 Complete the sentences with an appropriate adverb and a form of either **come** or **go**. **B**

- We'd just got to the top of the hill when down came the rain and we got soaked.
- Just when you've bought a computer that you think will last a lifetime, some new software that needs an even bigger hard drive.
- Whenever I ask the class a question, their hands and they sit patiently until I choose one of them to answer.
- I asked Ryan to get three kilos of potatoes from the supermarket and he only bought one kilo, so he to get some more.
- After I'd been waiting for an hour, the door opened and the nurse, who said the dentist would be able to see me now.
- I'd lost hope of getting the cat out of the tree, when a man with a ladder.
- As soon as I'd given Daisy some pocket money, she to buy sweets.

99.2 Match the sentence halves and write new sentences beginning **Were ...**, **Should ...**, or **Had ...**. **C**

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 If Kahn had not resigned as party leader, ... | a it would cut the journey time from New York to Tokyo by four hours. |
| 2 If you do not wish to receive further information about our products, ... | b there are less expensive models in the range. |
| 3 If the plane were ever to be built, ... | c he would have been sacked. |
| 4 If the ice hockey team wins again today, ... | d I would have no hesitation in accepting. |
| 5 If I were offered the job, ... | e he would be writing novels about the homeless in London. |
| 6 If a car had been coming the other way, ... | f it is unlikely that the electorate would have supported the government. |
| 7 If there had been a referendum on the issue, ... | g it will be their tenth consecutive victory. |
| 8 If you are not able to afford the SXL3, ... | h click on the box below. |
| 9 If Charles Dickens were alive today, ... | i I might have been seriously injured. |

1 + c Had Kahn not resigned as party leader, he would have been sacked.

99.3 Report the information in the table. Write three sentences using sentence frame (i) and three using sentence frame (ii).

Household expenditure (% of total income)

	Housing	Food and drink	Clothing	Transport	Recreation
Europe 1970	22	12	3	8	10
America 1970	15	14	2	6	12
Europe Today	17	8	5	12	9
America Today	16	15	3	7	13

- (i) *Europeans / Americans spend / spent more / less of their income on ... today / in 1970 than do / did Europeans / Americans*
 1 Americans spend more of their income on food and drink today than do Europeans.
- (ii) *Europeans / Americans spend / spent more / less of their income on ... than on ... today / in 1970, as is / was the case today / in 1970.*

99.4 Rewrite these sentences with a similar meaning using **as** or **than + be** or **do**. **D**

- I was opposed to the new road. Everyone else in the village was opposed to it, too.
I was opposed to the new road, as was everyone else in the village.
- Kamal went to Oxford University. His sister went there, too. *Kamal went ...*
- Compared with people in developed nations, people in poorer countries consume a far smaller proportion of the earth's resources. *People in poorer countries ...*
- Compared to five years ago, he is a much better teacher. *He is ...*
- Dan is a keen golfer. His wife is a keen golfer, too. *Dan is ...*

A

Inversion after negative adverbials

In formal and literary language in particular, we use negative adverbials at the beginning of a clause. The subject and first auxiliary are inverted, and **do** is used with a simple tense verb after –

- ☆ the time adverbials **never (before), rarely, seldom; barely / hardly / scarcely ... when / before; no sooner ... than:**
 - Seldom do we have** goods returned to us because they are faulty.
 - Hardly had everybody taken** their seats when Dr Lee began her lecture.
- ☆ **only + a time expression**, as in **only after, only later, only if, only once, only then, only when:**
 - She bought a newspaper and some milk at the shop on the corner. **Only later did she realise** that she'd been given the wrong change.
 - Only when she apologises will / speak** to her again.
- ☆ **only + other prepositional phrases beginning only by ..., only in ..., only with ..., etc.:**
 - Only by chance had Carl discovered** where the birds were nesting.
 - Maria had to work in the evenings. **Only in this way was she able to complete** the report.
- ☆ expressions such as **at no time, in no way, on no account, under / in no circumstances:**
 - At no time did they actually break** the rules of the game.
 - Under no circumstances are passengers permitted** to open the doors themselves.
- ☆ expressions with **not ...**, such as **not only, not until, not since, not for one moment** and also **not a + noun:**
 - Not until August did the government order** an inquiry into the accident.
 - Not a word had she written** since the exam had started.
- ☆ **little** with a negative meaning:
 - Little do they know** how lucky they are to live in such a wonderful house. (= 'they don't know' or 'they don't know sufficiently')

Note that inversion can occur after a clause beginning **only after / if / when** or **not until:**

- Only when the famine gets worse will world governments begin** to act.
- Not until the train pulled into the station did Miguel find** that his coat had gone.

B

Inversion after **so + adjective ... that; such + be ... that; neither ... / nor ...**

We can use **so + adjective** at the beginning of a clause to emphasise the adjective. When we do this, the subject and first auxiliary are inverted, and **do** is used with a simple tense verb:

- So successful was her business**, that Lana was able to retire at the age of 50.
- So dangerous did weather conditions become**, that all mountain roads were closed.

We can use **such + be** at the beginning of a clause to emphasise the extent or degree of something:

- Such is the popularity** of the play that the theatre is likely to be full every night.

We use inversion after **neither** and **nor** when these words begin a clause to introduce a negative addition to a previous negative clause or sentence:

- For some time after the explosion Jack couldn't hear, and **neither could he see**.
- The council never wanted the new supermarket to be built, **nor did local residents**.

Note that we also use inversion in **Neither / Nor do I, Neither / Nor does Diane** (etc.) and in **So do I, So does Maya** (etc.).

Exercises

100.1 Rewrite the sentences with a similar meaning beginning with a word / phrase from the box. **A**

only if barely only with rarely at no time little

- 1 A new film has not often before produced such positive reviews.
Rarely has a new film produced such positive reviews.
- 2 The public was never in any danger.
- 3 He only felt entirely relaxed with close friends and family.
- 4 The match won't be cancelled unless the pitch is frozen.
- 5 I didn't know then that Carmen and I would be married one day.
- 6 He had only just entered the water when it became clear he couldn't swim.

Now do the same using these words and phrases. **A**

only once only in on no account hardly not only not for one moment

- 7 You must not light the fire if you are alone in the house.
- 8 There was never any rivalry between the three brothers.
- 9 I wasn't only wet through, I was freezing cold.
- 10 I had only ever climbed this high once before.
- 11 The audience had only just taken their seats when the conductor stepped onto the stage.
- 12 He has only been acknowledged to be a great author in the last few years.

100.2 Complete these sentences in any appropriate way using the words from the box. **B**

alike boring complicated dominance interest strength

- 1 Such *is the interest in Dr Lowe's talk* that it will be held in a bigger lecture theatre.
- 2 Such _____ that few buildings were left standing.
- 3 Such _____ that she hasn't lost a match for over three years.
- 4 So _____ that even their parents couldn't tell them apart.
- 5 So _____ that it even took a computer three days to solve it.
- 6 So _____ that most of the students went to sleep.

100.3 Correct any mistakes in this news article. **Units 99 & 100**

NEWS**ONLINE**

TOWN EVACUATED AS FOREST FIRES APPROACH

The people of Sawston were evacuated yesterday as forest fires headed towards the town. Such the heat was of the oncoming inferno that trees more than 100 metres ahead began to smoulder. Only once in recent years, during 2004, a town of this size has had to be evacuated because of forest fires. A fleet of coaches and lorries arrived in the town in the early morning. Into these vehicles the sick and elderly climbed, before they headed off to safety across the river. Residents with cars left by mid morning, as all non-essential police officers did.

Hardly the evacuation had been completed when the wind changed direction and it became clear that the fire would leave Sawston untouched. Soon after that were heard complaints from some residents. 'At no time the fires posed a real threat,' said one local man. 'I didn't want to leave my home, and nor most of my neighbours did.' So upset some elderly residents are that they are threatening to complain to their MP. But Chief Fire Officer Jones replied, 'Hadn't we taken this action, lives would have been put at risk. Only when the fires have moved well away from the town residents will be allowed to return to their homes.'