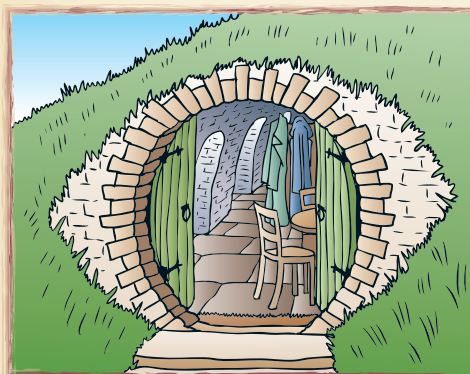


JRR Tolkein was a professor at Oxford University. He wrote a children's book called *The Hobbit* in 1937. Since then, the book has been translated into more than 30 languages and sold millions of copies worldwide. The book begins at the home of a hobbit called Bilbo Baggins ...

### Chapter 1

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit.



## Presentation

### Indefinite article a/an

Use the indefinite article *a/an*:

- to talk about one person or one thing in a general way (when it doesn't matter which one):  
*She lived in **a house** in Manchester.*
- to talk about something or someone for the first time (we don't know which one):  
*In **a hole** in the ground ...*
- to say that a person or thing is one of many:  
*He was **a professor** at Oxford University. (There is more than one professor.)*

### Definite article the

Use the definite article *the*:

- to talk about a specific person or thing:  
*JRR Tolkien was **the author** of The Hobbit.*
- to add a description of the specific thing or person:  
***The hole** had a round door.*
- to refer back to the same thing or person:

*The hole had a round door. <sup>↖</sup> The door opened on to a hall.*

- to say that a person or thing is the only one in that context:

*Tom was waiting by the entrance to the museum.  
(there is only one entrance)*

### Zero article

Use no article to talk about:

- uncountable or plural nouns in a general way:  
*The hobbit was fond of **visitors**.*  
***Houses** in England often have gardens.*

### some

Note that *some* isn't an article but it can replace *a/an* or *zero article* when you talk about plural countable nouns, or uncountable nouns.

*There's **a chair** in the hall. → There are **some chairs** in the hall.*

*There's **furniture** in the hall. → There's **some furniture** in the hall.*

We often use *some* to say *a number of ...* rather than talking about people/things in general:

*I like books about fantasy. (= all books)*

*I like **some** books about fantasy. (= a number of books, but not all)*

## Exercises

- 1 Read the text. One of the options in *italics* (1–6) is not possible. Circle the incorrect option.



Last weekend we visited <sup>1</sup>*a / the / ⊖* castle near my home. It has <sup>2</sup>*an / some / –* ancient statues at the entrance. The main door opens on to <sup>3</sup>*an / some / the* entrance hall and the first painting you see is a portrait of <sup>4</sup>*a / – / the* previous owner. All the rooms have <sup>5</sup>*a / some / –* beautiful furniture. The disappointing thing was that I wanted <sup>6</sup>*– / an / some* information about its history but no one there seemed to know anything about it.

- 2  Read this description of a room from a play called *A Doll's House*. Complete it using *a, an or the*. Then listen and check.

## ACT I Scene 1

The audience sees <sup>1</sup>..... comfortable room. At the back of <sup>2</sup>..... stage, there are two doors. There is <sup>3</sup>..... piano between <sup>4</sup>..... two doors. One door leads to <sup>5</sup>..... entrance-hall and <sup>6</sup>..... other door, which is partly open, leads to a study. We can see part of a desk in <sup>7</sup>..... study. On the left-hand wall of the main room, there is <sup>8</sup>..... window and there are two armchairs near it. On the right-hand side, there is another window and, in front of it, <sup>9</sup>..... stove and <sup>10</sup>..... rocking-chair. There's <sup>11</sup>..... small table between <sup>12</sup>..... stove and <sup>13</sup>..... rocking-chair. There are pictures on <sup>14</sup>..... walls and a small bookcase with some books. A fire burns in <sup>15</sup>..... stove.

- 3 Read the sets of three sentences. Write one indefinite article, one definite article and one zero article (–) in A, B and C.

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | A Henrik Ibsen was ..... author of the play <i>A Doll's House</i> . | B Here are your keys. .... room is on the second floor.                       |
|   | B Henrik Ibsen was ..... playwright from Norway.                    | C Do you have ..... room for two, please?                                     |
|   | C Henrik wrote ..... plays in the 19th century.                     | 4   |
| 2 | A I like watching ..... comedy shows on TV.                         | A They live in ..... house in the centre of Rome.                             |
|   | B There's ..... episode of that new TV show on this evening.        | B Some people still live in ..... houses made of straw.                       |
|   | C Have you seen ..... new detective show on Channel 5? It's great!  | C They live in ..... same house that Shakespeare once lived in.               |
| 3 | A We have ..... accommodation for 30 guests.                        | 5   |
|   |   | A Would you like ..... piece of chocolate?                                    |
|   |   | B In my opinion ..... chocolate they make in Mexico is the best in the world. |
|   |   | C I'm very fond of ..... chocolate.   |