Using Articles

Some Basic Guidelines
Indefinite Articles: “A” and “An”

- Use them to refer to a **singular, non-specific, countable** thing
  - “I want a car.”
  - “I saw a pretty bird yesterday.”
  - “I would like an apple.”
- Use “An” in front of a noun, adjective, or adverb that starts with either a vowel sound or a silent “h”
  - “An hour”
  - “An opening”
Indefinite Articles: “A” and “An”

- Do **not** use an indefinite article with a non-count noun
  - “Research,” “water,” “happiness,” “hair,” “oxygen”
  - Example: “I looked at research on the subject.”
Definite Article: “The”

- Use it to refer to a **singular OR plural noun**; must be a **specific thing**
  - “I want the car that I saw on sale today.”
  - “I saw the pretty bird that you mentioned yesterday.”
  - “Here is the apple you asked for.”
  - “Where is the doctor with whom I am scheduled to meet?”
Do not use “the” before

- Most countries
  - (except countries that are plural nouns or have “republic,” “kingdom,” or “states” in their name)
- Continents
- Streets
- Towns, cities, or states
No Article

- You can leave out an article when referring to **non-specific non-count nouns**
  - “Information,” “hunger”
  - Example: “I need information about this subject.”

- You can leave out an article with **plural, non-specific count nouns**
  - “Tickets,” “sandwiches,” “signatures”
  - Example: “I took pictures with my camera.”