



# USING ARTICLES WITH COUNT AND NONCOUNT NOUNS

## Countable Nouns

**Countable nouns** refer to things that we can count. Such nouns can take either *singular* or *plural* form and include *concrete*, *collective*, and *proper nouns*.

Countable: There are a dozen flowers in the vase.

Collective: London is home to several orchestras.

Proper: There are many Greeks living in New York.

(Note: Not all proper nouns may be countable.)

Only **countable nouns** can be used with the indefinite article *a/an*. If a **countable noun is singular**, it always takes an article, either definite (*the*) or indefinite (*a/an*). When a **countable noun is plural**, it takes the definite article if it refers to a specific group and no article if it is used in a general sense.

The guest of honor arrived late.

You are welcome as a guest in our home.

The guests at your party yesterday made a lot of noise.

## Uncountable Nouns

**Uncountable nouns** refer to things that we cannot count. Such nouns take only singular form.

Abstract nouns are uncountable.

The price of freedom is constant vigilance.

Some concrete nouns are uncountable.

The price of oil has stabilized recently.

**Uncountable nouns** never take the indefinite article. **The** is sometimes used with uncountable nouns in the same way it is used with plural countable nouns, that is, to refer to a specific *object*, *group*, or *idea*.

Information is a precious commodity in our computerized world.

The information in your files is correct.

Sugar has become more expensive recently.

Please pass me the sugar.

**Note:** The word *fewer* is used with **countable** nouns; the word *less* is used with **noncountable** nouns.