A vs. An

An is used before a word beginning with a vowel sound

an apple, an accident
an hour, but a horrible event
a university, but an unusual event

Use a or an before the following words.

_________ argument       ___________ European journalist
_________ unavoidable delay       ___________ honest man
_________ half hour       ___________ yellow dress
_________ union       ___________ humid day
_________ heiress       ___________ unanimous decision
_________ humiliating experience       ___________ uninvited guest
_________ herb       ___________ universal feeling
_________ ugly child       ___________ historical occasion
_________ unique opportunity       ___________ underdeveloped country
_________ garage       ___________ human being
_________ holiday       ___________ huge tree
_________ umbrella       ___________ humorous story
_________ hourly application       ___________ hospital
_________ useful gadget       ___________ honorable person

Article vs. No Article

The most important rule about the use of articles is that an article is required with a singular countable noun.

I need_________furniture (noncountable noun)
I need_________chairs (plural countable noun)
I need_________the or a_________chair (singular countable noun)
### Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The (Definite Article)</strong></th>
<th><strong>A (Indefinite Article)</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed from a word meaning <em>this</em>. Signals a <em>particular</em> person or thing—the <em>student sitting next to you</em>. Used with singular or plural nouns.</td>
<td>Developed from a word meaning <em>one</em>. <em>An</em> used before vowel sounds. Signals and <em>unspecified</em> one of others—a <em>student sitting in the front row</em>. Used chiefly with singular countable nouns.</td>
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### Uses

**The (Definite Article)**

1. For known persons or objects in the environment—*He walked into the house and hung his coat in the closet*
2. For persons, things, or ideas particularized by the verbal context
   a. Preceding context—*A strange dog came onto the porch. The dog seemed very friendly.*
   b. Following context—*The man standing near the window will be our guest speaker tonight.*
3. For a class as a whole—*The lion is an animal.*
4. With a "ranking" adjective—the *best way, the fifth lesson.*
5. With nouns or gerunds + of phrases—*the election of officers; the changing of the guards.*
6. In of phrases after words of quantity—*most of the men in the factory; four of the children from that school*.
7. For place names—*the Mississippi River; the Alps*.

**A (Indefinite Article)**

1. In the sense of *one, or each*—*waited an hour. His rent is $200 a month.*
2. For an unidentified number of a class—*We saw a lion at the zoo.*
3. For a representative member of a class
   a. Identifying an individual member—*That animal is a lion.*
   b. Defining a smaller class—*The lion is an animal.*
Exercises

Supply the article if it is required. Give the reason why you did or did not use the with the noncountable nouns.

Example:
a. The genius of Edison is universally recognized. (Genius is followed by the modifier of Edison.)
b. ______ genius is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration. (There is no modifier after genius.)

*************************************************************************

1. _______bread has been called the staff of life.

2. ______ bread you baked is delicious.

3. ______ silver is used for money and jewelry.

4. ______ silver in this ring is of an inferior quality.

5. He is studying______religion.

6. I would like to know more about______strange religion of these primitive people.

7. In order to survive, we must all have______ food and______water.

8. ______ food in the restaurant near me is fairly good.

9. ______ water used in this beer comes from a special spring.

10._______psychology of birds and animals would be an interesting subject to study.

11._______psychology tells us a great deal about human nature.

12. _______smoke coming from the forest fire can be seen for miles around.

13. Where there's_______ smoke, there's_______ fire.

14. _______baseball is the favorite sport of most Americans.

15. The American Constitution guarantees _______life, _______liberty, and _______ pursuit of happiness.

16._______ transportation has always been a problem in that area because of the bad roads.