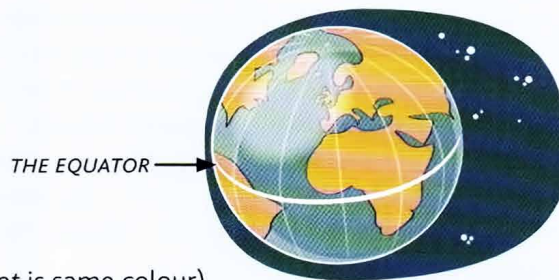


A

We use **the** when there is only one of something:

- Have you ever crossed **the equator**?
(there is only one equator)
- What's **the longest river in Europe**?
- Our apartment is on **the tenth floor**.
- Buenos Aires is **the capital of Argentina**.
- I'm going away at **the end of this month**.

We use **the** before **same** (**the same**):

- Your sweater is **the same** colour as mine. (*not is same colour*)
- 'Are these keys **the same**?' 'No, they're different.'

B

We say:

the sun	the moon	the earth	the world	the universe
the sky	the sea	the ground	the environment	the internet

- I love to look at the stars in **the sky**. (*not in sky*)
- The internet** has changed the way we live.
- We need to do more to protect **the environment**. (= the natural world around us)
- The earth** goes round **the sun**, and **the moon** goes round **the earth**.

We also use 'Earth' (without **the**) when we think of it as a planet in space (like **Mars, Jupiter** etc.).

- Which planet is nearest **Earth**?

We say **space** (without **the**) when we mean 'space in the universe'. Compare

- There are millions of stars **in space**. (*not in the space*)
- I tried to park my car, but **the space** was too small.

We use **a/an** to say what kind of thing something is (see Unit 71B). Compare **the** and **a**:

- The** sun is **a** star. (= one of many stars)
- The** hotel we stayed at was **a** very nice hotel.

C

We say: (go to) **the cinema, the theatre**.

- I go to **the cinema** a lot, but I haven't been to **the theatre** for ages.

When we say **the cinema / the theatre**, we do not necessarily mean a specific cinema or theatre.We usually say **the radio**, but **television/TV** (without **the**). Compare:

- I listen to **the radio** a lot. *but* I watch **television** a lot.
- We heard it on **the radio**. *but* We watched it on **TV**.

The television / the TV = the television set:

- Can you turn off **the television**, please?

D

We do not normally use **the** with **breakfast/lunch/dinner**:

- What did you have for **breakfast**?
- We had **lunch** in a very nice restaurant.

But we use **a/an** if we say 'a **big lunch**', 'a **wonderful dinner**', 'an **early breakfast**' etc. :

- We had **a very nice lunch**. (*not We had very nice lunch*)

E

We do *not* use **the** before *noun + number*. For example, we say:

- Our train leaves from **Platform 5**. (*not the Platform 5*)
- (*in a shop*) Do you have these shoes in **size 43**? (*not the size 43*)

In the same way, we say: **Room 126** (in a hotel), **page 29** (of a book), **question 3** (in an exam), **Gate 10** (at an airport) etc.

Exercises

73.1 Put in **the** or **a** where necessary. If no word is necessary, leave the space empty.

- 1 A: Our apartment is on the tenth floor.
B: Is it? I hope there's a lift.
- 2 A: Did you have _____ nice holiday?
B: Yes, it was _____ best holiday I've ever had.
- 3 A: Where's _____ nearest shop?
B: There's one at _____ end of this street.
- 4 A: It's _____ lovely day, isn't it?
B: Yes, there isn't _____ cloud in _____ sky.
- 5 A: I've got a problem with my computer. It isn't connecting to _____ internet.
B: That's interesting. I've got _____ same problem with mine.
- 6 A: We spent all our money because we stayed at _____ most expensive hotel in town.
B: Why didn't you stay at _____ cheaper hotel?
- 7 A: Would you like to travel in _____ space?
B: Yes, I'd love to go to _____ moon.
- 8 A: What's Jupiter? Is it _____ star?
B: No, it's _____ planet. It's _____ largest planet in _____ solar system.

73.2 Put in **the** where necessary. If you don't need **the**, leave the space empty.

- 1 I haven't been to the cinema for ages.
- 2 Sarah spends most of her free time watching _____ TV.
- 3 Do you ever listen to _____ radio?
- 4 _____ television was on, but nobody was watching it.
- 5 Have you had _____ dinner yet?
- 6 Lisa and I arrived at _____ same time.
- 7 What's _____ capital city of Canada?
- 8 What do you want for _____ breakfast?
- 9 I lay down on _____ ground and looked up at _____ sky.

73.3 Put in **the** or **a** where necessary. (See Unit 72 for **a** and **the** if necessary.)

- 1 Sun is star. The sun is a star.
- 2 I'm fed up with doing same thing every day. _____
- 3 Room 25 is on second floor. _____
- 4 Moon goes round earth every 27 days. _____
- 5 It was very hot day. It was hottest day of year. _____
- 6 We had lunch in nice restaurant by sea. _____
- 7 What's on at cinema this week? _____
- 8 I like to eat good breakfast before I go to work. _____
- 9 We missed our train because we were waiting on wrong platform. _____
- 10 Next train to London leaves from Platform 3. _____
- 11 You'll find information you need at top of page 15. _____

73.4 Complete the sentences using the following. Use **the** where necessary.

breakfast cinema ~~dinner~~ gate Gate 21 question 8 sea

- 1 Are you going out this evening?' 'Yes, after dinner !'
- 2 There was no wind, so _____ was very calm.
- 3 The test wasn't too difficult, but I couldn't answer _____.
- 4 'I'm going to _____ tonight.' 'Are you? What film are you going to see?'
- 5 I didn't have time for _____ this morning because I was in a hurry.
- 6 Oh, _____ is open. I must have forgotten to shut it.
- 7 (*airport announcement*) Flight AB123 to Rome is now boarding at _____.

The 2 (school / the school etc.)

A

Compare **school** and **the school**:



Ellie is ten years old. Every day she goes **to school**. She's **at school** now. **School** starts at 9 and finishes at 3.

We say a child goes **to school** or is **at school** (as a student). We are not thinking of a specific school. We are thinking of **school** as a general idea – children learning in a classroom.



Today Ellie's mother wants to speak to her daughter's teacher. So she has gone to **the school** to see her. She's at **the school** now.

Ellie's mother is not a student. She is not 'at school', she doesn't 'go to school'. If she wants to see Ellie's teacher, she goes to **the school** (=Ellie's school, a specific building).

B

We use **prison** (or **jail**), **hospital**, **university**, **college** and **church** in a similar way. We do not use **the** when we are thinking of the general idea of these places and what they are used for.

Compare:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ken's brother is in prison for robbery. (He is a prisoner. We are not thinking of a specific prison.) <input type="checkbox"/> Joe had an accident last week. He was taken to hospital. He's still in hospital now. (as a patient) <input type="checkbox"/> When I leave school, I plan to go to university / go to college. (as a student) <input type="checkbox"/> Sally's father goes to church every Sunday. (to take part in a religious service) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ken went to the prison to visit his brother. (He went as a visitor, not as a prisoner.) <input type="checkbox"/> Jane has gone to the hospital to visit Joe. She's at the hospital now. (as a visitor, not as a patient) <input type="checkbox"/> I went to the university to meet Professor Thomas. (as a visitor, not as a student) <input type="checkbox"/> Some workmen went to the church to repair the roof. (not for a religious service) |
|--|---|

With most other places, you need **the**. For example, **the station**, **the cinema**, (see Units 72C and 73C).

C

We say **go to bed** / **be in bed** etc. (*not* the bed):

- I'm going **to bed** now. Goodnight.
- Do you ever have breakfast **in bed**?

but I sat down on **the bed**. (a specific piece of furniture)

go to work / **be at work** / **start work** / **finish work** etc. (*not* the work):

- Chris didn't go to **work** yesterday.
- What time do you usually finish **work**?

go home / **come home** / **arrive home** / **get home** / **be at home** etc. :

- It's late. Let's go **home**.
- Will you be at **home** tomorrow afternoon?

D

We say **go to sea** / **be at sea** (without **the**) when the meaning is 'go/be on a voyage':

- Keith works on ships. He's **at sea** most of the time.

but I'd like to live near **the sea**.

- It can be dangerous to swim in **the sea**.

Exercises

74.1 Complete each sentence using a preposition (to/at/in etc.) + one of these words:

bed home ~~hospital~~ hospital prison school university work

- 1 Two people were injured in the accident and were taken to hospital.
- 2 In Britain, children from the age of five have to go
- 3 Mark didn't go out last night. He stayed
- 4 There is a lot of traffic in the morning when everybody is going
- 5 Kate's mother has just had an operation. She is still
- 6 When Sophie leaves school, she wants to study economics
- 7 Ben never gets up before 9 o'clock. It's 8.30 now, so he is still
- 8 If people commit crimes, they may be sent

74.2 Complete the sentences with **school** or **the school**.

- 1 Why aren't your children at school today? Are they ill?
- 2 When he was younger, Tim hated
- 3 There were some parents waiting outside to meet their children.
- 4 usually starts at 8.30 in the morning.
- 5 A: How do your children get to and from ? By bus?
B: No, they walk. isn't very far.
- 6 What sort of job does Emily want to do when she leaves ?

74.3 Some of these sentences need **the**. Correct them where necessary.

- 1 a 'How old is university?' 'About 200 years.' the university
- b In your country do many people go to university? OK
- c If you want to get a degree, you normally have to study at university.
- d This is a small town, but university is the biggest in the country.
- 2 a My brother has always been healthy. He's never been in hospital.
- b When Ann was ill, I went to hospital to visit her. When I was there, I met Lisa who is a nurse at hospital.
- c A woman was injured in the accident and was taken to hospital.
- 3 a John's mother is a regular churchgoer. She goes to church every Sunday.
- b John himself doesn't go to church.
- c John went to church to take some pictures of the building.
- 4 a Why is she in prison? What did she do?
- b A few days ago firefighters were called to prison to put out a fire.
- c Do you think too many people are sent to prison?

74.4 Which is correct?

- 1 How did you get home / ~~get to home~~ after the party? (get home is correct)
- 2 I like to read in bed / in the bed before I go to sleep.
- 3 Shall we meet after work / after the work tomorrow evening?
- 4 I love swimming in sea / in the sea.
- 5 It's nice to travel around, but there's no place like home / like the home!
- 6 Sam likes to go to bed / go to the bed early, and get up early.
- 7 I didn't sleep well in the hotel. Bed / The bed was uncomfortable.
- 8 How long did it take to cross the ocean? How long were you at sea / at the sea?
- 9 What time do you usually start work / the work in the morning?