

Zero article

Introduction



Marion lives in Ø Paris.

Definition

We don't always need to use **a**, **an** or **the** before a noun. We sometimes call this zero article or you may see it as Ø.

Uses

Rules for zero article	Examples	Exceptions
All continents and most countries	Ø Japan is in Ø Asia and has more than 6,000 islands. The north coast of Ø France faces the south coast of Ø England.	With republic, kingdom, etc. or plurals: the Czech Republic the United Kingdom the Netherlands
Islands	Ø Ibiza, Ø Corsica and Ø Sicily are all islands in the Mediterranean.	With the word isle(s) or plurals: the Isle of Wight the Channel Islands

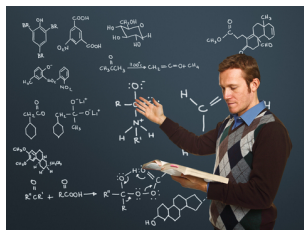
Cities and towns	Ø Birmingham is in England.	the Hague
Mountains & lakes	Ø Lake Gwynant is 3km from Ø Mount Snowdon in North Wales.	<p>When we don't include 'Mount': the Matterhorn the Jungfrau</p> <p>Groups of lakes: the Great Lakes</p>
Names of streets	Ø Oxford Street in London has 548 shops.	the High Street [Street signs usually show High Street but we always say the High Street.]
Names of shops	Ø Sainsbury's is England's oldest supermarket and Ø Tesco is the biggest.	For a particular shop: The Sainsbury's in the High Street is open on Sundays.
Languages	Swiss people speak Ø German, Ø French, Ø Italian or Ø Romansh.	We can say: The English language is spoken by about 900 million people.
Places such as school, prison, hospital, church etc. when we think of them generally, not as specific buildings	<p>Christians go to Ø church on Sundays.</p> <p>My son's going to Ø university.</p> <p>I'm at Ø work now.</p> <p>He takes his children to Ø school every morning.</p> <p>She's in Ø hospital. [staying as a patient]</p>	<p>the synagogue, the temple, the mosque, etc.</p> <p>Compare: She works in a hospital. [It doesn't matter which one.]</p> <p>I will go to the hospital tomorrow. [as a visitor - and we know which one.]</p>
Names of stations, airports, etc.	You can get a train to Ø Gatwick Airport from Ø Victoria Station.	

Sport and education	<p>I like playing Ø golf.</p> <p>She's studying Ø archaeology at Manchester University.</p>	
Generalisations	<p>I love Ø coffee but I don't like Ø tea.</p> <p>He reads Ø magazines about Ø cars and Ø motorbikes.</p> <p>Ø Happiness is more important than Ø money.</p>	<p>Compare:</p> <p>I need a coffee but the coffee at work is horrible!</p> <p>She loves Ø music but she doesn't like the music her son listens to.</p>
Meals	<p>In Spain, they have Ø lunch and Ø dinner much later than in England.</p>	<p>Compare:</p> <p>We have a nice lunch every Sunday with my family.</p>
Other expressions	<p>I go to Ø bed at 11.00.</p> <p>I go to work by Ø bus or Ø train but never on Ø foot.</p> <p>They're on Ø holiday.</p>	<p>Compare:</p> <p>The dog's in the bed again! [talking about a specific bed]</p>

Examples



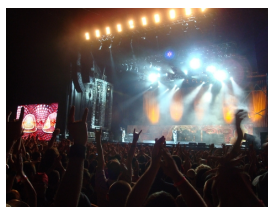
My daughter is at Ø university [= she's a student] but she's on Ø holiday at the moment with a friend.



My husband works as **a** lecturer at **the** university. [We know which one]



I love listening to **Ø** music...



but I don't like going to **Ø** concerts; **the** music is too loud.

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Last update: 2023/02/14 14:21

