Definition of a noun

Nouns

We use a noun to name a person, place, or thing.

In a sentence, it can be a subject or an object. In English, nouns do not have genders [masculine or feminine].

Jenny is a teacher. She lives in London with her husband, Bill, and their two children. Bill is a musician. He plays the guitar in a band. Their daughter goes to school and their son is studying medicine at King's College.

Common nouns and proper nouns

We use proper nouns for specific people, places, institutions or organisations. Proper nouns always start with a capital letter.

Common nouns are not the names of a specific or single person, place or thing. They do not start with a capital letter.

Examples

Common nouns	Proper nouns
continent	Europe
country	England
town/city	Paris
street	Oxford Street
station	Victoria Station
doctor	Doctor Smith
uncle	Uncle James
theatre	the National Theatre
river	the River Seine
airport	Heathrow Airport
building	Buckingham Palace
woman	the Queen
president	the President

Concrete nouns and abstract nouns

We use concrete nouns to name people or things which we can see, hear, touch, smell or taste - things which exist physically.

We use abstract nouns to name feelings, ideas and states - things which do not exist physically.

Examples

Concrete nouns	Abstract nouns
chair	love
computer	sadness
man	hope
woman	comfort
house	truth
dog	confidence
cheese	fear
garden	bravery
pen	opportunity

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