What Is a Determiner?

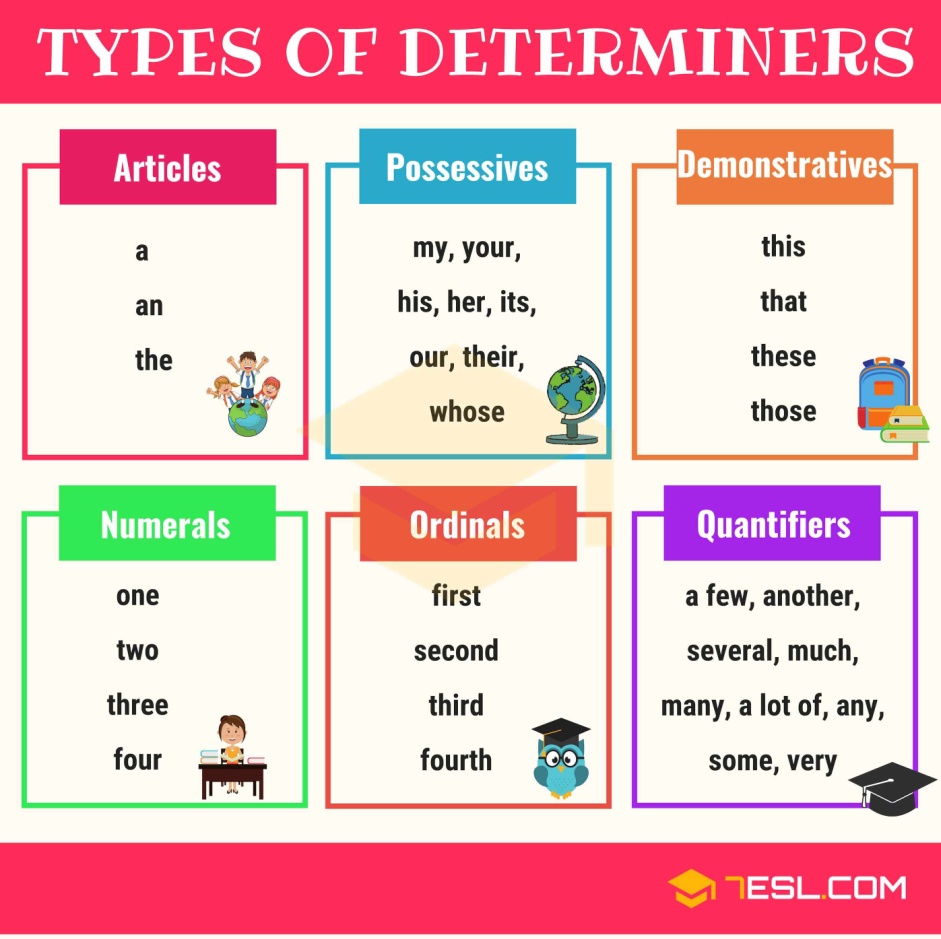
An important role in English grammar is played by determiners – words or phrases that precede ( come before) a noun or [noun phrase](https://7esl.com/noun-phrase/) . They are required to express its reference in the context / to give more information about the noun. It can be said that Determiners are used with nouns to clarify the noun.

The type of determiner used depends on the type of noun.

* **Singular Nouns** (except proper noun)- always needs a determiner
* **Plural Nouns** - the determiner is optional
* **Uncountable Nouns** - the determiner is also optional

There are about 50 different determiners in the English language they include:

* [**Articles**](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Determiners/A_An_The.htm) - *a, an*, *the*
* [**Demonstratives**](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Determiners/Demonstratives_-%20That_This_Those_These.htm) - this, that, these, those, which etc.
* **Possessive Determiners** - my, your, our, their, his, hers, whose, my friend's, our friends', etc.
* [**Quantifiers**](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Determiners/Quantifiers_English_Grammar.htm) - few, a few, many, much, each, every, some, any etc.
* **Numbers** - one, two, three, twenty, forty
* **Ordinals**- first, second, third etc

****.

**As we have already covered ‘Articles in the previous chapter, let us begin with demonstratives -**

There are 4 demonstratives - **That - This - These - Those** Demonstratives are used to state the distance from the speaker. The distance can be either psychological or physical.

They are sometimes referred to as demonstrative adjectives or demonstrative pronouns as they can be used as [pronouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Pronouns_Nouns.htm) or [adjectives](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Adjectives/Adjectives_Page.htm) . When they are used as adjectives they modify the [noun](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Nouns_Page.htm).

**This** – is used with singular nouns, when referring to an object that is close to the speaker

* **This** book is interesting.
* Is **this** your bag?

**That** – is used with singular nouns, when referring to an object or person that is far to the speaker

* **That** is your bag.
* Is **that** your bag?
* **That** is not my bag.

**These** - is used with plural nouns, when referring to an object that is close to the speaker

* **These** clothes need to be put in the drawer.
* Are **these** clothes for me?
* **These** plants look very nice.

**Those** - is used with plural nouns, when referring to an object or person that is far to the speaker

* I really like **those** cars.
* Are **those** your friends?

Possessives

### Possessives are forms that we use to talk about possessions and relationships between things and people. They take different forms depending on how they are used.

**Possessive determiners** indicate possession or ownership of someone, something, or some place, a part of a thing or body, a feeling or thought, an event etc. They use words such as **my**, **your**, **his**, **her**, **its**, **our**, and **their and are used** before a noun.

* This is **my** book.
* Is she your sister ?
* He put his hand on my shoulder.
* It was difficult to hide my excitement.
* When is her wedding?

 But remember , the other set of possessives ( mine, yours, ours, theirs ,hers) are not determiners. They are possessive pronouns. . The basic difference, they say, "is that pronouns replace full [noun phrases](https://www.thoughtco.com/noun-phrase-or-np-1691441). Possessive determiners, on the other hand, have to occur with a noun"

The definite determiner **the** may be used instead of a possessive determiner. However, when referring to someone in the family or a relative, **the** may not be used.

#### Examples:

* She punched him on **his** nose.
* She punched him on **the** nose.
* We walked back to **our** house when it started to rain.
* We walked back to **the** house when it started to rain.

The definite determiner **the** may not be used.

* **No**:**The**wife is watching me cook.-X
* **Yes**:**My wife is watching me cook.**
* **No**:I called **the** uncle to hurry up. -X
* **Yes: I called my uncle to hurry up.**

### Quantifiers

What are quantifiers?

Quantifiers are used to state quantity or amount of something without stating the actually number. They answer the questions "How many?" and "How much?" Some examples are-

1. Words indicating a large or small quantity and their comparative and superlative forms

Examples: much/many, little/few, more, most, less/fewer, least/fewest.

Examples: a lot of, lots of, plenty of, a great deal of, tons of, etc.

2. Words and phrases expressing some unspecified or probably quite small amount

Examples: a few/a little, several, a couple of, a bit of, a number of, etc.

3) Phrases expressing precise quantity

Examples: a pair of, five liters of, etc.

4. Words and phrases expressing multiples or fractions

Examples: half, half of, double, twice, three times, twice as much, etc.

5. Words expressing maximum, sufficient or zero quantity

Examples: all, both, enough, sufficient, no.

Note that many of these quantifiers can be modified by adverbs and adverbial phrases such as almost, over, more than, less than, when the meaning is appropriate.

Quantifiers can be used with [plural countable nouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Countable_Nouns.htm) and [uncountable nouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Uncountable_Nouns.htm).

There are 3 main types of quantifiers-

Quantifiers that are used with [countable nouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Countable_Nouns.htm),

quantifiers that are used with [uncountable nouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Uncountable_Nouns.htm).

quantifiers that are used with either c[ountable nouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Countable_Nouns.htm) or [uncountable nouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Uncountable_Nouns.htm).

**Quantifiers With Countable Nouns**

* **A Few** - I have **a few** books.
* **Many** - I have **many** friends.
* **Several** - My father has **several** workers.

**Quantifiers With Uncountable Nouns**

* **Few** - We have **few** friends.
* **Much** - How **much** work is there?
* **Little** - I have **a little** money.

**Quantifiers With Countable Nouns & Uncountable Nouns**

 **No** - We have **no** car. - Countable Noun

 **No** - We have **no** time. - Uncountable Noun

 **All** - I have **all** the books. - Countable Noun

 **All** - I have **all** the money. - Uncountable Noun

 **Plenty** - There is **plenty** of water. - Countable Noun

 **Plenty** - There is **plenty** of food. - Uncountable Noun

* **Enough** - We have **enough** boxes.- Countable Noun
* **Enough-**  I have **enough** money - Uncountable Noun

Some and any can be used when:

The exact number is not known or the exact number is not important or relevant.

Some and any are used with [countable nouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Countable_Nouns.htm) and [uncountable nouns](https://english-the-easy-way.com/Nouns/Uncountable_Nouns.htm).

**Some** - is used in positive sentences, offering & requests

* I am going to buy **some** cake for tonight.
* We have to make **some** phone calls.
* They have to bring **some** money, so they can pay me.
* Can I have **some** more tea, please?
* Can you do **some** work for me on Tuesday?

**Any** - used in negative sentences, to state something does not matter

* I am not going to buy **any** cake for tonight.
* We do not have to make **any** phone calls.
* They do not have to bring **any** money.
* We like **any** kind of bread.
* I am happy to go **any** place.

**Someone** - is used with positive statements & with questions but only when you think or know the answer will be positive

* I want **someone** to come with me to the store.
* The dogs want **someone** to feed them.
* Does **someone** want to go out for dinner tonight?
* Does **someone** want cake?

**Anyone**- is used with negative statements & questions

* I don't want **anyone** to call me today.
* We don't know **anyone** who smokes cigarettes.
* Does **anyone** want to go to the store with me?
* Does that book belong to **anyone**?

Much & many are words that are very similar. There is only one difference:

**Many** - is used with countable nouns (something we can count)

* I don't have **many** apples.
* Do we have **many** people coming to visit tomorrow?
* I have **many** books.

**Much** - is used with uncountable nouns (something we can't count)

* I don't have **much** time today.
* The dogs at the dog shelter have so **much** love to give to someone. I hope all the dogs get a home.
* We have to **much** laundry too do today.

**No**- no + noun; a noun is needed after "no"

* I have **no** money.
* We have **no** place to live.
* My sister has **no** idea about computers.
* I have **no** brothers. I have only two sisters.
* We have **no** time to help you.

**None** - is used without a noun

* How many books do you have? None.
* **None** of my friends came to visit me in the hospital.
* I knew **none** of the answers.
* This is **none** of your business.
* **None** of the book are ours.

Attempt the exercises in chapter 7 – Determiners and Quantifiers. If there is any doubt, send a message on whatsapp.