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The general rule of English is: we don't use article with [proper nouns](#) – names of people and places and things.

- *Mike lives in Bangalore, India.*
- *I have a teacher named John. John is from England.*

However, some proper nouns are used with the [definite article 'the'](#). We use 'the' with the following proper nouns:

## Geographic areas

1. **astronomical names:** the Sun, the North Star, the Milky Way, the Great Bear, etc. But, we do not use 'the' before most planet names, like Saturn and Mars.

- *The Sun is the star at the center of the Solar System.*

2. **certain geographical names:** the South Pole, the North Pole, the Arctic, the Netherlands, the Hague, the UK, etc.

- *The International Court of Justice has its seat in the Hague.*

3. **mountain ranges:** the Alps, the Pennines, the Urals. But, single mountains take no article: Everest, Mont Blanc, etc.

- *The Himalayas are home to many of the world's highest mountains.*

4. **rivers, seas, oceans, canals:** the Thames, the Amazon, the Danube, the Black Sea, the Pacific Ocean, the Panama Canal, the English Channel, etc. But, names of lakes are used without 'the', i.e. Lake Ontario, Lake Chad, etc.

- *The Danube is an important waterway.*

5. **some countries, areas, provinces:** the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, the People's Republic of China, the Philippines, the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America

(USA), the Ukraine, the Caucasus.

- *There were representatives from the Netherlands present.*

6. **parts of towns:** the West End, the Soho, the City (London), etc.

- *This new business center is situated in the East End of London.*

7. **parts of the world:** the South, in the North, to the West, etc.

- *The political situation in the East remained largely unstable.*

8. **deserts:** the Sahara, the Gobi, the Karakum, etc.

- *The Sahara covers most of northern Africa.*

## Names

9. **names of public institutions** (museums, hotels, restaurants), unique buildings and monuments: the White House, the National Gallery, the British Museum, the Hermitage, etc.

- *If you are fond of paintings, you should go to the Tate Gallery.*

10. **names of organizations, government, committees, associations, foundations,** etc.: the Finance Committee, the British Parliament, the Teachers' Association, etc.

- *The United Nations has many offices all over the world.*

11. **names of vessels:** the Titanic, the Discovery, etc.

- *The Queen Elizabeth made its first journey in 1939.*

12. **names of many English-speaking newspapers:** the Times, the Washington Post, the Guardian, etc.

- *The Washington Post wrote about the meeting of the two presidents.*

13. **names of families:** the Forsytes, the Simpsons, etc.

- *The Thompsons don't live here now; they moved last year.*

Check out this video to learn when to use definite and zero article with names:

See also:

[The Zero Article](#)