

## Special Uses of Articles:

### 1. Media and communications:

Use a noun PLUS definite article to refer to the systems of *communication* and the *mass media*, in contrast to the actual machine of communications.

→ **The** telephone is the system of communication.

→ **A** telephone is the physical machine.

→ **The** newspapers are all in agreement on the latest financial disaster.

EXCEPTION → Television usually has no article: *Did you see him on television?*

### 2. Means of transportation:

Use the definite article to refer to the *whole transport system*, rather than to an individual vehicle.

→ How long does it take on **the** bus?

→ **The** subway is quicker.

EXCEPTION → *If you use "by" to show how you traveled, there is no article. → I go by subway. / I traveled by plane.*

### 3. Forms of entertainment:

To refer to *a form of entertainment* in general, use the definite article.

→ I enjoy seeing **the** ballet.

\*To refer to a *particular event*, use the indefinite article

→ I saw **a** good movie last night.

#### 4. Place / object of activity nouns:

Certain nouns refer to either a place / object or to an activity. When they refer to an activity, **do not** use the definite article.

Activity:	Object:
I go to bed at 11 o'clock.	Don't jump on the bed.
She went to school for many years.	The school was too small.
Many families eat dinner together.	The dinner was delicious.
I shower before breakfast.	The breakfast was delicious.
They are at church.	The church is very old.
She is in class.	The class is in Room 102.

#### 5. Directions:

Nouns indicating direction **do not** take the definite article.

→ Go two blocks south and turn left.

*EXCEPTION: nouns indicating political divisions take the definite article: She is on **the** left of the political party.*

#### 6. Periods of time:

Names of *decades*, *centuries*, and *historic periods* take the definite article, as they are a form of unique reference.

→ **The** 1960s were a time of student rebellion.