

Los artículos

(primera parte)

In the context of grammar, an article is a **small word** that is placed **before the noun** to provide information about it. For instance, articles may indicate whether the noun is countable or uncountable, refer to a generic group or a specific portion of that group, and specify whether the noun is known or unknown to the reader or listener.

In Spanish, articles also indicate the **gender and number** of the noun. Nouns are either masculine or feminine, and they can come in singular or plural form.

Spanish articles are categorized into two groups: **definite** (artículos definidos or determinados) and **indefinite** (artículos indefinidos or indeterminados).

Determinados / Definidos			Indeterminados / Indefinidos		
	Masculino	Femenino		Masculino	Femenino
	Singular EL El gato de mi hermana es muy cariñoso. My sister's cat is very loving.	Singular LA La primavera es mi estación favorita. Spring is my favorite season.		Singular UN Hay un gato debajo del coche. There is a cat under the car.	Singular UNA He visto una película excelente. I've seen an excellent movie.
	Plural LOS Los perros son muy buenas mascotas. Dogs are very good pets.	Plural LAS Por lo general, no me gustan las flores. Generally, I don't like flowers.		Plural UNOS Necesito (unos) lápices. I need (some) pencils.	Plural UNAS Tengo (unas) entradas para ti. I have (some) tickets for you.
The basic rule is that they refer to something or someone that is already known by the reader or listener, that is one of a kind, or that refers to a generic group or concept.			The basic rule is that they introduce something or someone that is not yet known by the reader or listener, or that is one of many.		

Articles may be preceded by prepositions (e.g., a, ante, bajo, con, contra, de, desde, durante, en, entre, hacia, hasta, mediante, para, por, según, sin, sobre...). Two prepositions deserve particular attention: 'a' (to) and 'de' (of), as they form a contraction when followed by the article 'el', becoming '**al**' and '**del**' respectively. These are the only two contractions that exist in Spanish.

Contracción

Preposición + Artículo



Preposición		Artículo		Contracción	Ejemplos
a	+	el	=	al	Los niños van <i>al</i> colegio. Ellas vienen <i>del</i> gimnasio.
de	+	el	=	del	

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Credit: <https://www.spanish.cl/grammar-rules/contractions-al-del.htm>

Before delving into [further complexities](#) regarding Spanish articles and their use, you should first become familiar with the basics. Practice using definite and indefinite articles, and learn essential vocabulary with the following YouTube video. Credit: VideoEle.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZPjk2fb0L4>