

UNIT 72 The (1)

For the difference between **the** and **a/an** see Unit 71.

a) We say **the** ... when there is only one of something:

- What is **the** longest river in the world? (There is only one longest river in the world.)
- We went to **the** most expensive restaurant in town.
- **The** only television programme he watches is the news.
- Paris is **the** capital of France.
- Everybody left at **the** end of the meeting.
- **The** earth goes round **the** sun. (Also: 'the moon / the world / the universe'.)

b) We say: **the sea the sky the ground the countryside / the country**

- Would you rather live in a town or in **the country**?
- Don't sit on **the ground**! It's wet.
- We looked up at all the stars in **the sky**.

We say **go to sea / be at sea** (without **the**) when the meaning is **go/be on a voyage**:

- Ken is a seaman. He spends most of his life at **sea**.

but: I would love to live near **the sea**. (*not* 'near sea')

We say **space** (*not* 'the space') when we mean space in the universe:

- There are millions of stars in **space**. (*not* 'in the space')

but: He tried to park his car but **the space** wasn't big enough.

c) **Cinema theatre radio television**

We say **the cinema / the theatre**:

- We went to **the cinema** last night.
- Do you often go to **the theatre**?

Note that when we say '**the cinema / the theatre**', we do not necessarily mean one particular cinema or theatre.

We usually say **the radio**:

- We often listen to **the radio**. - I heard the news on **the radio**.

But we usually say **television** (without **the**):

- We often watch **television**.
- I watched the news on **television**.

but: Can you turn off **the television**, please? (= the television set)

d) **Meals:** We do not normally use **the** with the names of meals:

- What time is **lunch**?
- We had **dinner** in a restaurant.
- What did you have for **breakfast**?
- Ann invited me to (*or for*) **dinner**.

But we say a **meal**:

- We had a **meal** in a restaurant.

We also say a when there is an adjective before **lunch/breakfast** etc.

- Thank you. That was a very **nice lunch**. (*not* 'that was very nice lunch')

For more information about **the** see Units 71, 73-7.

UNIT 72 Exercises

72.1 Answer these questions in the way shown.

Example: 'Was it a good film?' 'Yes, it was the best film I've ever seen.'

- 1 'Is it a big hotel?' 'Yes, it is in the city.'
- 2 'Is he a rich man?' 'Yes, he is I've ever met.'
- 3 'Was it a bad accident?' 'Yes, it was I've ever seen.'
- 4 'Is it a cheap restaurant?' 'Well, it is you will find.'
- 5 'It's hot today, isn't it?' 'Yes, it is day of the year.'

72.2 In this exercise you have to put in a/an or the. Sometimes you don't need either word – you leave it blank. (If necessary see Unit 71 for a/an and the.)

Examples: We went to the most expensive restaurant in town.

Do you want to watch television this evening?

Last night we went out for a meal in a restaurant.

- 1 I wrote my name at top of the page.
- 2 moon goes round earth every 27 days.
- 3 The Soviet Union was first country to send a man into space.
- 4 Did you see the film on television or at cinema?
- 5 After lunch, we went for a walk by sea.
- 6 I'm not very hungry. I had big breakfast.
- 7 John was only person I talked to at the party.
- 8 Tim lives in small village in country.
- 9 Peru is country in South America. capital is Lima.
- 10 I never listen to radio. In fact I haven't got radio.
- 11 It was beautiful day. sun shone brightly in sky.
- 12 I've invited Tom to dinner next Wednesday.
- 13 What is highest mountain in world?
- 14 We don't go to theatre very much these days. In fact, in town where we live there isn't theatre.
- 15 It was a long voyage. We were at sea for four weeks.
- 16 I prefer swimming in sea to swimming in pools.
- 17 Can you turn television down, please? It's a bit loud.

72.3 Here are some things Tom did yesterday. Write a sentence for each.

Morning: 8.00 breakfast 8.30–9.00 radio 9.30 walk/country

Afternoon: 1.00 lunch 2.30 cinema

Evening: 6.30 dinner 8.00–10.00 television

- 1 At 8 o'clock he had breakfast.
- 2 From 8.30 until 9.00 he listened
- 3 At 9.30 he went for a walk in
- 4 At 1.00 he
- 5 At 2.30
- 6 At 6.30
- 7 From