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used to indicate one	a sandwich
used to indicate cost, speed, or frequency	three dollars a pound 60 miles an hour four times a day
for certain numbers	a hundred, a thousand, a million, a couple, a dozen

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when a word is used for the second time	He gave me a knife and a spoon. The knife was dirty.
when talking about a known object	I've just washed the car (= our car, this car)
when only one object exists	the moon, the earth, the River Thames
in a general sense, with musical instruments	Can you play the guitar?
certain places	the Alps, the mountains

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with abstract nouns	life, beauty, love
languages	He doesn't speak French.
academic subjects	history, Latin
materials, other uncountable nouns, and plural countable nouns when they are considered in a general sense	wine, coal, sugar happiness, honesty dogs, Europeans, CDs
before certain words like: school, home, work, church, bed, hospital	We went to church. She's at home.
before countries and towns	I come from Italy. But note: the USA, the USSR, the Soviet Union, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates