

TIP SHEET

Adjectives

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Adjectives are words that describe or modify a noun or pronoun. There are different kinds of adjectives.

- Most adjectives tell *what kind, which one, how many, or how much*.

The icy wind made me shiver. (what kind)

The office is on the third floor. (which one)

The storm dropped a few inches of snow. (how much)

- The words *a, an, and the* are special adjectives. They are called *articles*. *The* is a definite article. It refers to a specific person, place, thing, or idea. *A* and *an* are indefinite articles. They refer to general persons, places, things, or ideas. Use *a* before words beginning with a consonant. Use *an* before words beginning with a vowel sound.

Have the steamy soup for lunch. (specific; the steamy soup)

Have a sandwich for lunch. (nonspecific; any kind of sandwich)

- When used before nouns, the words *this, that, these, and those* are *demonstrative adjectives*. They point out specific nouns or pronouns. *This* and *these* point out nouns or pronouns that are nearby. *That* and *those* point out nouns or pronouns that are farther away. *This* and *that* come before singular nouns or pronouns. *These* and *those* come before plural nouns or pronouns.

This pen is out of ink.

These pencils should be used for the test.

That star is bright.

Those stars are faint.

Note that when *this, that, these, and those* are used alone, they are called *demonstrative pronouns*.

- *Proper adjectives* are adjectives formed from proper nouns.

Proper Noun

America

Greece

China

Proper Adjective

American students

Greek art

Chinese history

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