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Name: Natasha, but everyone calls me Tash!

Occupation: Illustrator. I love it! I don't go out to work. I work from home!

Favourite food: I love pasta. I hate peas and green beans.

Likes and dislikes: I love cats but I hate dogs, especially really small dogs – and the two big black dogs that live next door.



Free time activities: I spend hours listening to the radio on my computer and watching TV. I love playing football and I'm learning to play the guitar.

What you admire in a friend: A good sense of humour, honesty, intelligence – and a great music collection!



Presentation

The zero article means you do not use *a/an* or *the*.

You do not use an article with plural or uncountable nouns to talk about people, animals or things in a general way.

- plural nouns
I hate dogs = You hate all dogs. (don't say *I hate the dogs*.)
Compare with: *The two big black dogs that live next door.* (= two specific dogs)
- uncountable nouns
I love pasta. = You love all types of pasta. (don't say *I love the pasta*.)
Compare with: *I love the pasta your mum makes.* (= a specific type of pasta)
- abstract nouns and concepts
I love silence. (don't say *I love the silence*.)
Compare with: *I love the silence in the early morning when everyone is sleeping.* (= a specific example of silence)

Some special cases

- play* + sports
You say *play tennis* (and other sports) with **no article**, but you say *play the piano* (and other instruments).
I play football. I'm learning to play the guitar.
- home, work* and *school*
You do not use an article when talking about *home, work* or *school* as part of your day to day life.
I'm staying at home tonight.
I'm not going in to work tomorrow.
Where are the children? They're at school.
Compare with:
Her grandmother lives in an old people's home. (= a specific kind of home)
I've finished all the work I had to do this weekend. (= a specific amount of work)
The children go to the school at the end of the road. (= explaining which school)
- by* + transport
by car, by taxi, by train

1 Complete the text with *the* or \emptyset (zero article).



Name: Fred

Favourite food: I love ¹ _____ homemade food. I particularly love ² _____ food my grandmother makes. I hate ³ _____ burgers and ⁴ _____ chips and ⁵ _____ coffee from ⁶ _____ machine at work.

Likes and dislikes: I love ⁷ _____ dancing and spending time with my friends. I especially love going to ⁸ _____ park and listening to ⁹ _____ music on my mp3 player.

Free time activities: I like to keep fit. I play ¹⁰ _____ basketball twice a week and go swimming in ¹¹ _____ local pool every morning. I spend ¹² _____ hours playing ¹³ _____ games on my computer and I love watching ¹⁴ _____ DVDs of old black and white films. I'm learning to play ¹⁵ _____ saxophone. I'm not very good but it's ¹⁶ _____ great fun.

2 Cross out the definite articles which are not necessary.

- I admire ~~the~~ people who know what they want to do in ~~the~~ life.
- Those are the people who live in the house next door to us.
- I loved the apple pie your mum made for us last night.
- The bus is always late in the morning and I'm always late for the work!

5 The money cannot buy the happiness.

6 Jim is the happiest person I know.

7 A: How did you get here?

B: I came by the bus.

A: The number 1?

B: No, the number 3.

8 A: Where are you working at the moment?

B: At the new school near the stadium.

9 A: Does Tom do any sport at the school?

B: Yes, he plays the football twice a week.

3 Add *the* to the conversation where necessary. Then listen and check.

A: Would you and ^{the} kids like to have lunch with us on Sunday?

B: Yes, we'd love to. Kids love food you cook!

A: Is there anything they don't like? I'm thinking of making chicken and rice. And ice cream for dessert.

B: Great! They both love chicken – especially with special homemade tomato sauce you always make.

A: And maybe we can go and see a film later? New Disney film is on at Odeon Cinema near us.

B: I can take them if you want and you can stay at home and enjoy some peace and quiet.

A: That sounds great!

B: No problem. See you on Sunday then.

A: Yeah, bye.