

Determiners are words that come before nouns and specify something about their quantity, definiteness, or ownership. Determiners vs. descriptive adjectives As we've seen, determiners function like adjectives do in that they modify nouns and pronouns, but they are not descriptive in the way that words referred to as "true" adjectives are. There are a few other things to know about the way determiners behave differently from descriptive adjectives that will help you know how to use them correctly.

Placement of determiners When both a determiner and a descriptive adjective appear before the same noun, the determiner always comes first: Red a dress is a festive choice. A red dress is a festive choice. Hot, humid, these days are starting to wear me down. These hot, humid days are starting to wear me down. Young few people listen to swing music nowadays. Few young people listen to swing music nowadays.

Determiners in subject complements Unlike descriptive adjectives, determiners can rarely be used as part of a subject complement. Consider the following two sentences: The first uses a regular descriptive adjective in the subject complement, while the second tries to replace the descriptive adjective with a distributive determiner (and doesn't make any sense). The vase on the table is beautiful. The vase on the table is every. Quantifying determiners, however, can sometimes be used as part of a subject complement: The flowers in the garden are many and beautiful.

Determiners and comparative and superlative forms Determiners aren't descriptive, so in general, comparative or superlative forms for them would be illogical. After all, one thing can be grainier than another thing, but nothing can be "five-er" or "whose-er" than something else. Another name for determiners is limiting adjectives; as that name suggests, determiners modify nouns by a subtractive process rather than the additive one descriptive adjectives use. The definite article is the, and the indefinite articles are a and an. An article can appear alone before the noun it modifies or in combination with one or more descriptive adjectives. A determiner, also known as a limiting adjective, is a word that appears before a noun, providing clarifying context about the number, definiteness, or ownership of the noun. In other words: Descriptive adjectives add detail to our understanding of the nouns they modify, while determiners narrow down the identity of a noun by introducing specificity. In fact, demonstrative determiners are the adjectival forms of the demonstrative pronouns, and they, too, refer to something that the listener or reader already knows about or that is clear from the context.

7 Relative determiners Relative determiners, also known as relative adjectives, specify something about nouns in noun phrases that introduce relative dependent clauses. The types of determiners are articles, demonstrative determiners, distributive determiners, interrogative determiners, possessive determiners, quantifying determiners, and numbers and relative determiners.

7 types of determiners There are several common kinds of determiners, including articles, demonstrative determiners (or demonstrative adjectives), interrogative determiners (interrogative adjectives), possessive determiners (possessive adjectives), and quantifying determiners and numbers.

1 Articles An article is a determiner that precedes a noun or noun phrase and identifies it as either specific or nonspecific. o Each table in the cafeteria has a napkin dispenser on it. **4 Interrogative determiners** Interrogative determiners narrow down a noun's attributes by asking a direct or an indirect question. There are different schools of thought about whether possessive adjectives should be considered determiners at all; some argue that they are descriptive and thus should be classified as true adjectives. When used as determiners, numbers, both cardinal and ordinal, also narrow down nouns and

pronouns to specific amounts: Sima was late to class three times this semester.

2 Demonstrative determiners

Demonstrative determiners, also known as demonstrative adjectives, communicate the placement of a noun in space or time. They just come before a noun, modifying it instead of replacing it. Here are examples of the word *these*, used as a demonstrative determiner.

6 Quantifying determiners and numbers

Quantifying determiners specify something about the nouns they appear in front of by grouping them together or indicating how much or how many of them there are. The quantifying determiners supply the rare exception here again--the word *few* has a comparative and superlative form, as in this example: There were fewer guests at the party than expected.

If the group of demonstrative determiners looks familiar, that's because they are the same words as the demonstrative pronouns, which are used to replace an already mentioned or implied word or phrase. As with the demonstrative determiners and pronouns, the interrogative determiners are the adjective forms of the interrogative pronouns.

5 Possessive determiners

Possessive determiners, also known as possessive adjectives, are the possessive forms of the personal pronouns and can appear before a noun: *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *their*, and *whose*. A determiner is a word that appears before a noun and specifies something about the number, definiteness, or ownership of the noun. Determiners are sometimes considered a kind of adjective since they modify nouns and pronouns. Here, we'll look at what a determiner is and is not and how to use determiners correctly in writing.

3 Distributive determiners

Distributive determiners refer to a group or individual parts within a group. The possessive forms of nouns are also sometimes considered to be possessive determiners: The team met Gerald's partner at a work event. Here are some examples of determiners in sentences:

- o The painting on the left is our favorite.
- o Whose shoes were left outside on the lawn?
- o There are few things Xan enjoys more than mint chocolate-chip ice cream.

The relative determiners are *what*, *whatever*, *which*, and *whichever*. They are closely related to the relative pronouns.

- o Working from a cafe is a great option--if you order food or coffee and can find a table near an electrical outlet.

The demonstrative determiners are *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*. Words like *each*, *every*, *all*, and *both* are distributive determiners. The interrogative determiners are *whose*, *what*, and *which*. They tell us something about the ownership of the noun or a relationship it has with another word in the sentence.

- o Mirin hasn't seen many movies lately.

Here are some examples:

- o Please sit in whichever seat you like.

Determiner FAQs

What is a determiner? They are also called limiting adjectives.

What's the difference between determiners and adjectives?

What is a determiner?

- o She bought three boxes of pasta.
- o The car was parked in front of the dilapidated brick building.
- o In those days, Enid wore a lot of bright colors.
- o Max wondered aloud which taxi would arrive first.
- o Gerald met his partner at a work event.
- o I made it to the pool to swim laps several days last week.

If there is a fourth time, Sima's grade may be affected.

- o Jean will let us know what day they are arriving.

What are the types of determiners?

- o I have gone to see that movie several times.
- o This cat is the one I was telling you about.
- o Let's go to that restaurant again.
- o We can't see the lake because of these trees.
- o Be sure both kids get a bath tonight.
- o What kind of person does something like that?
- o Where do your ideas for your writing come from?