

# The Adjective

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## Adjectives

An adjective is a word that is used to modify a noun or a pronoun.

An adjective helps to define or describe a noun or pronoun by telling *what kind*, *which one*, or *how many* about that noun or pronoun.

WHAT KIND?	clean room, brown hair, French pen pal, easy test
WHICH ONE?	first choice, that calendar, this box, next class
HOW MANY?	many fish, six songs, some ideas, few coins

**NOTE** *A*, *an*, and *the* are special adjectives that we call *articles*. *A* and *an* are *indefinite articles* because they refer to any member of a group. *The* is the *definite article* because it refers to a specific member of a group.

**EXERCISE A** Underline each adjective in the following sentences. Each sentence has more than one adjective. Do not underline the articles *a*, *an*, and *the*.

<b>Example</b>	1. Find a <u>safe</u> path around <u>those</u> <u>four</u> <u>huge</u> rocks. [ <i>Safe</i> modifies <i>path</i> . <i>Those</i> , <i>four</i> , and <i>huge</i> modify <i>rocks</i> .]
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1. There is a large family of healthy ducks by the lake. [Which word modifies *family*? Which word modifies *ducks*?]
2. During the hot afternoon, several deer crossed the grassy meadow.
3. Look at the small, brown rabbit near the trees.
4. A gray dove looked for tiny seeds beneath a leafy, green bush.
5. Did you see the beautiful fur on that fox?

## Pronoun or Adjective?

Some words, such as *either*, *neither*, *which*, *this*, *these*, or *that*, may be used as either pronouns or adjectives. When these words take the place of nouns or other pronouns, they are pronouns. When they modify nouns or pronouns, they are adjectives.

<b>PRONOUNS</b>	I wore <b>this</b> .	She knows <b>neither</b> .	<b>Which</b> won?
<b>ADJECTIVES</b>	I wore <b>this</b> hat.	She knows <b>neither</b> boy.	<b>Which</b> team won?

**NOTE** When the *demonstrative pronouns* *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those* modify nouns or pronouns, they are called *demonstrative adjectives*.

**EXERCISE B** Underline each adjective in the following sentences. Then, draw an arrow from each adjective to the noun or pronoun it modifies. Do not underline the articles *a*, *an*, and *the*.

<b>Example</b>	<p><u>That</u> <u>young</u> vine is dangling from <u>this</u> tree. [<i>That</i> and <i>young</i> modify <i>vine</i>. <i>This</i> modifies <i>tree</i>.]</p>
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6. Either coach can train the new team. [Which two words modify nouns?]
7. Which long table will seat the hungry students?
8. Those three rosebushes won't bloom for many weeks.
9. Recent graduates helped several teachers purchase those.
10. We realized that neither frog had been making that unusual noise.

**NOTE** Many words that can stand alone as nouns can also be used as adjectives. Adjectives formed from proper nouns are called *proper adjectives*.

<b>NOUNS</b>	stone	history	Maine
<b>ADJECTIVES</b>	<b>stone</b> fence	<b>history</b> lesson	<b>Maine</b> lobster

### Adjectives in Sentences

An adjective usually comes before the noun or pronoun it modifies. However, sometimes the adjective follows the word it modifies, and occasionally a word or words may come between the adjective and the word it modifies.

<b>EXAMPLE</b>	 <p>The bus, <b>large</b> and <b>yellow</b>, carried us to school. [<i>Large</i> and <i>yellow</i> both modify and follow <i>bus</i>.]</p>
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**EXERCISE C** Decide whether each of the underlined words in the following sentences is used as an adjective, a noun, or a pronoun. If the word is used as an adjective, write *ADJ* on the line provided. If the word is used as a noun, write *N* on the line provided. If the word is used as a pronoun, write *PRO* on the line provided.

<b>Example</b>	<u>ADJ</u>	1. We ate lunch at the kitchen table. [ <i>Kitchen</i> modifies <i>table</i> .]
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- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Is this the homemade pickle relish? [Does *this* modify a noun, or does it refer to a noun?]
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The relish in this jar is delicious!
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. The relish was made from California cucumbers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. This is the relish from California.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. This sandwich, because it's dry and plain, needs relish.

Answer Keys:

Exercise A:

1. There is a large family of healthy ducks by the lake.
2. During the hot afternoon, several deer crossed the grassy meadow.
3. Look at the small, brown rabbit near the trees.
4. A gray dove looked for tiny seeds beneath a leafy, green bush.
5. Did you see the beautiful fur on that fox?

Exercise B:

1. Either coach can train the new team.
2. Which long table will seat the hungry students?
3. Those three rosebushes won't bloom for many weeks.
4. Recent graduates helped several teachers purchase those.
5. We realized that neither frog had been making that unusual noise.

Exercise C:

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|---------|---------|
| 11. PRO | 14. N   |
| 12. ADJ | 15. ADJ |
| 13. ADJ |         |