



## Noun

A **noun** is a person, place or thing.

Here are some examples of person or place nouns: Sophie, London. These nouns are names, so they start with a capital letter. Person and place nouns are called **proper nouns**.

Most nouns are things. A thing can be something you see, smell, hold, feel or imagine. For example, a *table* is a thing and is therefore a noun. Although you can't touch it, *beauty* is also a sort of thing, so *beauty* is also a noun. So is *thing*. So is *noun*. Nouns that are things are called **common nouns**.

Most nouns are things, and things usually have a **determiner** before them. Determiners put limits on nouns. Determiners include the words *the, a, an, this, these, some* and numbers. For example:

<i>the</i> river	<i>some</i> biscuits	<i>this</i> government	<i>six</i> thoughts
<i>that</i> tree	<i>an</i> apple	<i>these</i> doors	<i>one</i> idea

**NOTE** We can divide common nouns into **countable nouns** and **non-countable nouns**. Countable nouns can be more than one, e.g. car/cars, idea/ideas. Non-countable nouns cannot usually be more than one, e.g. happiness, water.

### TRY IT OUT

Here are some nouns of various sorts:

river	disappointment	afternoon	music
biscuit	Government	Leeds	happiness

- 1 For each noun above, decide if it is proper, countable or non-countable.
- 2 Write out this sentence and underline the five nouns:

Without cars or buses to disturb the peace, silence settled on the street.

## Adjective

Nouns often come connected to other words that give more information about them. Some of these words are called **adjectives**. Adjectives are sometimes called *describing words*.

In the six phrases below, the adjective – the describing word – is shown in *italics*.

<i>deep</i> happiness	her <i>terrible</i> anger
the <i>Labour</i> government	a <i>tall</i> tree
two <i>awful</i> thoughts	this <i>juicy</i> apple

**NOTE** The six phrases above are examples of **noun phrases**. They are called noun phrases because the noun is the vital word in the phrase. The other words in the phrase give more information about the noun. Noun phrases can be very long. In the noun phrases below, the noun **headword** is shown in *italics*.

a very long and relaxing *holiday*  
 this ten-year-long *reign* of terror  
 those horribly cruel text *messages*

Adjectives can come after their noun as well as before it. In the examples below, the adjective is shown in *italics*.

Her *sudden* anger...  
 The car was *red*.  
 Sarah is *tall*.

**TIP** Using too many adjectives or long noun phrases can make your writing worse. It is often better to choose just the right word, rather than using lots of words.

