

Basics. Articles in Fixed Expressions

Hard

B2 | Upper Intermediate

Article

Determiner

Phrase

Preposition

Verb

Collocations

Idiom

1. Help the detective finish her incident report by selecting the correct article for each fixed expression.

I am currently at _____ loss to explain how the suspect managed to delete the classified files. He claimed he did it by _____ mistake, but I was under _____ impression that the system required a complex password and two-factor authentication.

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- A) a
- B) the
- C) no article

Blank 2

- A) a
- B) the
- C) no article

Blank 3

- A) a
- B) the
- C) no article

2. Help the head chef review the restaurant's chaotic night by selecting ALL the grammatically correct sentences.

Select all that apply.

- A) The new waiter was in a hurry and dropped the soup.
- B) I am at a loss to explain why the oven exploded.
- C) Please don't make fuss about the burnt toast!
- D) The manager left in hurry after the incident.

3. Help the HR manager complete her incident report.

During the meeting, Marcus ____ to the director's suggestion that the team should work on Saturdays.

Select one.

- A) took an exception
- B) took the exception
- C) took exception
- D) took some exception

4. Select ALL the sentences from the traveler's complaint letter that correctly use (or omit!) articles in fixed expressions.

Select all that apply.

- A) I boarded the wrong flight to Antarctica by mistake.
- B) To make matters worse, I had packed only beach clothes.
- C) I boarded the wrong flight to Antarctica by a mistake.
- D) To make the matters worse, I had packed only beach clothes.

5. Read the struggling artist's text message to her friend and choose the correct article for each gap.

It's incredibly hard to make _____ living as a sculptor these days. Getting a solo gallery exhibition is completely out of _____ question without the right connections. I hope you don't take _____ offense, but I might need to borrow some money to buy my next block of marble!

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- A) a
- B) the
- C) no article

Blank 2

- A) a
- B) the
- C) no article

Blank 3

- A) a
- B) the
- C) no article

6. Choose the correct phrase to complete the assistant's slightly presumptuous email.

Since you were unreachable during your silent yoga retreat, I ____ of upgrading your flight to first class using your miles.

Select one.

- A) took a liberty
- B) took the liberty
- C) took liberty
- D) took my liberty

7. Choose the correct phrase for each gap to help Sarah finish her dramatic text message to her best friend about a terrible first date.

He made such _____ about the restaurant's lighting, and then he spilled red wine on my favorite dress completely _____; honestly, I don't think we are going to be compatible _____.

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- A) a fuss
- B) the fuss
- C) fuss

Blank 2

- A) by mistake
- B) by a mistake
- C) by the mistake

Blank 3

- A) in the long run
- B) in a long run
- C) in long run

8. Complete the spy's encrypted message to headquarters by selecting the correct article for each idiom.

Please keep _____ eye on the target's apartment from the van. If you catch _____ sight of anyone leaving through the back door, notify me immediately. We cannot afford to be left in _____ dark about his movements tonight.

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- A) an
- B) the
- C) no article

Blank 2

- A) a
- B) the
- C) no article

Blank 3

- A) a
- B) the
- C) no article

9. Complete the head chef's performance review of his well-meaning but chaotic new assistant by choosing the correct expression for each gap.

I explained the complicated recipe to him _____, specifically asking him to keep _____ on the simmering sauce, and although he is a decent cook _____, he still managed to burn the garlic!

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- A) in detail
- B) in a detail
- C) in the detail

Blank 2

- A) an eye
- B) the eye
- C) eye

Blank 3

- A) on the whole
- B) on a whole
- C) on whole

10. Read the employee's gossipy email and select ALL the sentences that use fixed expressions correctly.

Select all that apply.

- A) The promotion came completely out of the blue.
- B) I was under the impression that he was quitting!
- C) On a whole, it was a very strange day at the office.
- D) He got the job out of blue without even interviewing.

11. Help Detective Miller complete her case notes about a very clumsy suspect by choosing the correct phrase for each blank.

The suspect left the crime scene _____, claiming that the heavy chandelier had fallen completely _____. However, the evidence strongly suggests he broke it _____ to create a distraction.

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- A) in a hurry
- B) in the hurry
- C) in hurry

Blank 2

- A) out of the blue
- B) out of a blue
- C) out of blue

Blank 3

- A) on purpose
- B) on a purpose
- C) on the purpose

12. Complete the veteran spy's advice to his new partner.

Remember, rookie: we always sweep the hotel room for hidden microphones as ____.

Select one.

- A) a matter of course
- B) the matter of course
- C) matter of course
- D) one matter of course