

Zero Article for buildings: Practice Exercise

Grammar: Zero Article



Sometimes we don't need articles when talking about buildings (see lesson). Use this exercise to practice your knowledge.

Questions:

1. "Larry starts school at 9am."
Is Larry is a student or a teacher?
2. (Brit.) "I left hospital two hours ago."
Am I a patient or a doctor?
3. "The police took me to the prison."
Am I a prisoner or a lawyer?
4. "I saw them outside church."
Am I / they worshippers or not?
5. "She hates the college."
Is she a student or an architect?
6. "I drove past the prison yesterday."
Am I an ex-prisoner or a guard?
7. "What age did you leave school?"
Am I talking about when 'you' used to be a student?

End of questions. Now go to the answer (next page)

Answers:

1. **Probably a student. A teacher would probably say “I start teaching at 9am”**
2. **A patient. A doctor would probably say “I finished my shift two hours ago”. Note that if the speaker is American, s/he could be a doctor or a patient. (Because in US English “the” hospital can mean a hospital in general.)**
3. **A lawyer (“the” prison). If I were a prisoner I would say the police took me “to prison”.**
4. **Yes, we are worshippers – no article used. If I say “the church”, I am talking about the church simply as a building. There is no implication of going into the church to pray.**
5. **Most likely an architect. Adding “the” moves the emphasis from the care provided by the college to the college as a building.**
6. **Either ex-prisoner or guard. This is “the prison” as a building. Even if I used to be a prisoner there, I am no longer under its care, so I do not omit the article.**
7. **Yes. “To leave school” is an expression meaning to end one’s school education.**

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