a/an/the/or no article:

1) Use **a/an** when the listener does not know which thing we mean. Use **the** when it is clear which thing we mean:
Ex: She sat down on **a** chair. She took **the** chair near the door.

2) Use **the** when it is clear in the situation which thing or person we mean.
Ex: Can you turn off **the** light, please?

3) Use **the** when there is only one of something:
Ex: He went to **the** most expensive restaurant in the city.
On peut également dire, mais avec un sens différent :
He went to a most expensive restaurant.
Il se rendit dans un restaurant extrêmement cher.
Ou si la chose en question est exclusive..."the" place to be (dans ce cas-ci, on prononce le "the" avec un e long).

4) Use **the** as follows: **the** sea, **the** sky, **the** ground, **the** country
Ex: Do not sit on **the** ground. He lives near **the** sea. BUT, we say **go to sea/be at sea** when it means a trip.
Dans ces cas-là, c'est une chose précise.

The Mediterranean (la seule) is a sea (une de plusieurs).
"to go to sea", c'est devenir marin.
"to be at sea", soit être parti sur mer, soit être confondu.

5) Cinema, theater, radio, television: **the** cinema/**the** theater (and it does not necessarily mean a specific one) we usually say **the** radio (you listen to **the** radio), but we usually say **television** (you watch **television**) but we say "Can you turn off **the** television?"[1]
I watch the television in my living room, not the one in my bedroom. Encore, il s'agit d'un objet précis.

*[1] One watches television. If you are watching "the television", it means that you are looking at the plastic object which could be turned off. On the other hand, one listens to **the** radio.*

6) Meals: we do not normally use the with **the** names of meals.
What time is lunch? BUT we say **a** meal: We had **a** meal in a restaurant.
The meal was delicious (celui qu'on a pris ensemble au restaurant).

7) We use **the** + a singular countable noun to talk about a type of animal, plant, a machine, invention, etc.
Ex: **The** lily is my favorite flower. (or Lilies are....)
Ex: **The** bicycle is an excellent means of travel.
Oui, mais on peut aussi dire :
A bicycle is an excellent means of travel. (n'importe quel vélo)
The bicycle was invented centuries ago. (tous les vélos)

8) **the** + adjective: We use **the** with some adjectives (without a noun). The meaning is always plural. (**the** rich = rich people in general): **the** rich, **the** old, **the** blind, **the** sick, **the** disabled, **the** injured, **the** poor, **the** young, **the** deaf, **the** dead, **the** unemployed...(you cannot say "a blind", you have to say "a blind man")

9) **the** + nationality words: use the with some nationality adjectives when you mean "the people of that country."
Mais ce n'est pas obligé : French people are charming.

10) Do not use **the** before a noun when you mean something in general:
Ex: I love flowers. Doctors are paid more than teachers.

11) We say **the** when we mean something in particular:
Ex: I like your garden. **The** flowers are beautiful.

12) prison, school, university, college, church: We do not use **the** when we are thinking of the idea of these places and what they are used for.
Ex: After I leave school, I want to go to university. BUT: Where is **the** university, please?

13) bed, work, home:
Ex: He went to bed. She is at work.
S'il s'agit d'un lieu. Sinon :
The bed is great.
Oh, you're on that project? How is the work going?
The home she made was wonderful.

14) Geographical names with and without **the**:
a) continents: no **the**
b) countries and states: no **the** (France, Italy...) But if there is "republic, union, kingdom, federation, states" in the name, use **the**: **the** USA We also use **the** with plural names: **the** Netherlands, **the** Philippines...
c) cities: no **the** with cities, towns, villages. Exception: **The** Hague.
d) islands: we usually use **the** with plural group names: **the** Bahamas. We do not usually use **the** with singular island names: Sicily, Corfu...
e) regions: **the** Middle East, **the** north of England, but northern Ireland
f) mountains: ranges with **the**: **the** Rockies individual mountains: no **the**: Mount Everest (exception: the Matterhorn)
g) lakes: no **the** (usually) *The Great Lakes*

h) oceans, seas, rivers, canals, locks: use **the**.

15) Streets, roads, squares: usually no **the**: Fifth Avenue

16) Names with two words: usually no **the**: Victoria Station, Hyde Park...
The Grand Canyon

17) We usually say **the** before the names of these places: <u>hotels</u> (**the** Hilton), <u>restaurants/pubs, theaters, cinemas</u> (**the** Odeon), <u>museums/galleries</u>...

18) If the shop, restaurant, bank, etc. is named after the person who started it (these names usually end in "s" or "'s"), we usually do not use **the**: Lloyd's Bank

19) Use **the** before the names of <u>places, buildings</u>, etc. with "<u>of</u>": **the** Bank <u>of</u> England, **the** Great Wall <u>of</u> China...

20) Use **the** with the names of <u>newspapers</u>: **the** Times.