

## All, no, none, each, every, either, neither

Adapted from "First Certificate Language Practice" by Michael Vince

### Explanations

**All** - When *all* is used to show the quantity of something, it can be followed by *of*.  
*Jim was there **all** (of) the time.*

- *All* can be used for emphasis. Note the position.

***They all** wore white shorts and shirts.*

***Those stamps you bought me** have **all** disappeared.*

• *All* means *the only thing* when it is used in the construction *all* + subject + verb.

***All I want** is some peace and quiet.*

It is unusual to use *all* as a single-word subject or object. Instead we use *everything* to mean *all the things*.

***Everything** has gone wrong!*

(**NOT** All has gone wrong!)

**No**  
*not any.*

• When *no* is used to show the quantity of something, it can mean

*There are **no** plates left. **No** new students have joined the class.*

- *No* can also be used with a comparative adjective.

*It's **no** worse than before.*

*There were **no less than** 500 applications for the job.*

- *No* is not normally used alone before an adjective. Compare:

*This book doesn't have **any** interesting parts.* (usual)

*There are **no** interesting parts in this book.* (unusual - very emphatic)

*It is **not** interesting.*

But there is an idiomatic use of *no* with *good*.

*I tried hard but it was **no good**, I couldn't reach.* (no good = useless)

Another common idiomatic use is with *-ing* forms.

*Remember, **no cheating!** **No smoking**, please.*

**None** • We do not use *no of*. Instead, we use *none of* or *none* on its own.

***None of** the films that are showing in town look very interesting.*

*I've checked all the films that are showing in town. **None** look very interesting.*

In everyday speech *none* is often followed by a plural verb form. In formal speech or writing it can be followed by a singular verb form.

*None of these telephone work.*  
*None of the members of the committee has arrived yet.*

- To emphasize the idea of *none* we can use *none at all* or *not one*.

A: *How many people came to the party?*

B: *None! /None at all / Not one.*

**Each, every** - The meaning of *each* and *every* is very similar and often either word is possible.

*Each/Every time I come here I go to my favourite restaurant.*

But sometimes there is a small difference. We use *each* when we think of the single items in a group, one by one. We use *every* when we think of the items in a group all together. Compare:

*They gave a medal to each member of the team. I believe every word he says.*

- *Each* is more usual with a smaller group, and can mean *only two*. *Every* is more usual with a larger number, and cannot mean *two*.

*She kissed him on each cheek.*

- We can use *each of*, but we cannot use *every of*.

*When the team won the cup, each of them was given a medal.*

- *Each* can be used after the subject, or at the end of a sentence.

*The members each received a medal. The members received a medal each.*

- Repeated actions are generally described with *every*.

*I practise the violin every day.*

**Either,**

**Neither**

- *Either* and *neither* both refer to choices between two items. *Either* means *the one or the other*. *Neither* means *not the one or the other*.

*Monday or Tuesday? Yes, either day is fine.*

*Monday or Tuesday? I'm sorry, but neither day is convenient.*

- So *not + either* is the same as *neither*.

*I didn't like either of those films.*

*Neither of the films was any good.*

- *Either* can also mean *both*. Note that *either* is followed by the singular form of the noun.

*On either side of the house there are shops.* (on both sides)

## Key points

- 1 In the construction *all* + subject + verb, *all* means *the only thing*.

*All we need now is a new car.*

But we do not use *all* by itself as a subject. Instead we use *everything*.

*Everything is missing, I'm afraid.* (NOT *All is missing*)

- 2 Note these idiomatic uses of *no*.

*No parking. No smoking. It's no use. It's no good.*

- 3 *Each* refers to the single items in a group, one by one. *Every* refers to all the items of a group together. It is usual for larger numbers.

*Make sure that each letter has a stamp.*

*Every Manchester United fan will be celebrating tonight.*

Both words are followed by a singular verb (*has* not *have* in the example above). We can use *each of* but not *every of*.

*Each of these books has its interesting points.*

- 4 *Either* and *neither* refer to two items, separately.

*Both hotels look good to me. Either one would be OK.*

*Neither of these hotels is very comfortable.*

Both words are followed by a singular verb (*is* not *are* in the example above).

- 5 *None* (= not one) is often followed by a plural verb form in everyday speech, but a singular verb in formal speech and writing.

*None of the students have/has answered the question correctly.*

