

16 Indefinite pronouns

Mum, I'm getting something to eat. Do you want anything?

1 Form

PEOPLE	someone/somebody	anyone/anybody	everyone/everybody	no one/nobody
THINGS	something	anything	everything	nothing
PLACES	somewhere	anywhere	everywhere	nowhere

We use a singular verb with all these pronouns.

Everything is expensive in Switzerland. Nobody lives on the moon.

! ~~X Everybody make mistakes.~~ ✓ Everybody **makes** mistakes.

2 Indefinite pronouns with some/any

We use indefinite pronouns to talk about a person, object or place. The exact person, object or place is not important:

	some	any	EXAMPLES
in positive sentences	✓	X	<i>I'll ask someone for help. He needs something for his computer.</i>
in negative sentences	X	✓	<i>I can't find anywhere to sit. There isn't anything on TV tonight.</i>
in most questions	X	✓	<i>Did you see anyone in town? Is there anything you want at the shop?</i>
when you ask for or offer something	✓	X	<i>Can I have something to drink? Would you like something to eat?</i>
when you suggest something	✓	X	<i>Let's go somewhere nice for a meal tonight.</i>

some/any ➤ Unit 7

3 Indefinite pronouns with no

We use *no one/nobody*, *nowhere* and *nothing* with positive verbs, but the meaning is negative:
There's nowhere to sit. (= There isn't anywhere to sit.) No one answered the phone.

! We don't use two negatives in English:
~~X I didn't eat nothing.~~ ✓ I **didn't** eat **anything**.
~~X Nobody isn't here.~~ ✓ **Nobody** is here.

4 Indefinite pronouns with every

We use *everyone/everybody*, *everything* and *everywhere* when we mean 'all people', 'all things' or 'all places':

*Everyone in the room stopped speaking. Everybody was very happy with the results.
Is everything all right? I want to visit everywhere on the island.*

Practice

1 Choose the correct words in *italics*.

- 0 I'm thirsty. I need *anything* / *something* to drink.
- 1 Everybody on my course *has* / *have* a university degree.
- 2 We don't have *something* / *anything* in the fridge.
- 3 The shop was expensive so I didn't buy *nothing* / *anything*.
- 4 She looked *anywhere* / *everywhere* but she couldn't find her key.
- 5 Be quiet! Everyone *are* / *is* asleep.
- 6 They're on holiday so nobody *is* / *isn't* at home.
- 7 No one *like* / *likes* unfriendly people.
- 8 We don't know *somebody* / *anybody* who speaks Turkish.

2 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Complete the conversation with indefinite pronouns.

- A I'm hungry. I haven't eaten (0) *anything* today.
Let's find (1) for lunch.
- B But there's (2) to eat near here.
- A I'm sure there is. Let's ask (3)
- B Excuse me. Is there (4) to eat around here – a café or a restaurant?
- C There's a hotel on Grange Street, but it's quite expensive.
- B Oh. Are there any cheaper places to eat?
- C Mmm, not really. I'm afraid (5) in this town is expensive.
- A What about (6) like a sandwich?
- C Well, there's a supermarket near here. I think it sells sandwiches.



3 Write the sentences again. Change the underlined word(s) to an indefinite pronoun and/or a different form of the verb.

- 0 There is no food in the fridge. *There is nothing in the fridge.*
- 1 All the students in my class are friendly.
- 2 There are no students in the classroom.
- 3 I didn't eat any food yesterday.
- 4 All the things here are dirty.
- 5 I've got no clothes to wear to the wedding.
- 6 There isn't a place to sit on this train.

4 Find four more mistakes in the sentences and correct them. Tick (✓) the correct sentences.

- 0 Nobody in my class likes classical music. ✓ 00 ^{Everywhere} ~~Somewhere~~ is busy at this time of year.
- 1 We didn't get nothing at the supermarket today.
- 2 Somebody was talking, but I don't know who.
- 3 The restaurant was empty; there wasn't nobody there.
- 4 Everyone use the Internet these days.
- 5 In my town there are cafés everywhere.
- 6 I think anything is expensive in this shop.