

3

Indefinite pronouns / adverbs (some-, any- and no- words)

Come out now, little monster. You have **nowhere** to hide.

Can **anyone** tell me what has happened?



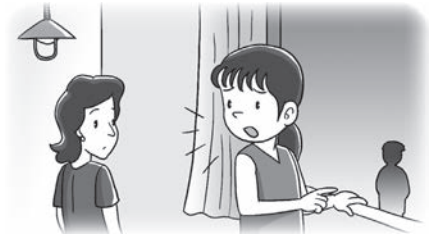
- 1 We can use *some*, *any* and *no* to form indefinite pronouns / adverbs. We use them to talk about people, things or places when we do not know the exact person, thing or place we are talking about, or when it is not important to be exact.

Indefinite pronouns		Indefinite adverbs
People	Things	Places
someone / somebody	something	somewhere
anyone / anybody	anything	anywhere
no one / nobody	nothing	nowhere

The rules about *some*, *any* and *no* covered in **Book 1 Unit 4** basically apply to the indefinite pronouns and adverbs covered here.

- 2 We use *someone* / *somebody*, *something* and *somewhere*:

- in positive statements
 - There is **somebody** outside the house.*
 - Dan did **something** bad this morning.*
 - Let's go **somewhere** nice for dinner.*
- in questions to make offers, requests or suggestions
 - Would you like **something** to drink?*
 - Can **someone** help me move the table?*
 - Shall we drive **somewhere** in the car?*



- 3 We use *anyone* / *anybody*, *anything* and *anywhere*:

- in negative statements and in questions
 - I didn't know **anybody** at the party.*
 - Did you do **anything** yesterday?*
 - Did you go **anywhere** interesting last week?*
- in positive statements with words that are negative in meaning
 - Hardly** **anyone** completed the test.*
 - I **never** buy **anything** in this shop.*
 - She **rarely** goes **anywhere** by herself.*



- 4 We use *no one / nobody, nothing* and *nowhere* when the number of people, things or places is zero. They mean the same as *not anyone / anybody, not anything* and *not anywhere*.

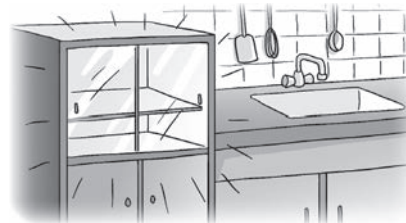
No one could answer Mrs Lo's question.

There is *nothing* in the cupboard.

(= There isn't **anything** in the cupboard.)

They had *nowhere* to go.

(= They didn't have **anywhere** to go.)



However, we do not usually use *no one / nobody* as objects. It is more common to use *not anyone / anybody*.

We saw *no one*. → We didn't see *anyone*.

- 5 Indefinite pronouns can replace nouns as the subject or object of a sentence. When they are the subject of a sentence, they take a singular verb.

Someone recommended this restaurant to me. (subject)

It's dark in here. I can't see *anything*. (object)

Somebody is sitting on my seat.

Does anyone want a drink?

Nowhere interests me more than here.

- 6 We often use indefinite pronouns / adverbs with adjectives and *to*-infinitives.

There is *nothing interesting* on TV.

I just want *someone to play* with.



- 7 We often use *else* after indefinite pronouns / adverbs to refer to a different person, thing or place.

Can you ask *someone else*? I'm very busy right now. (= a different person)

Is there *anywhere else* we can go? (= a different place)



Common errors

- 1 Note that we use *no-* words with positive verbs, but *any-* words with negative verbs.

✓ There **was** *nobody* here.

✗ ~~There wasn't nobody here.~~

✓ There **wasn't** *anybody* here.

- 2 We don't use the prepositions *at, in* or *to* with *somewhere, anywhere* and *nowhere*.

We want to stay ~~at~~ *somewhere* near the airport.

He doesn't live ~~in~~ *anywhere* special.

They went ~~to~~ *nowhere* without a guide.

Grammar in text

This section introduces students to the unit focus in context, followed by questions that help them reflect on what they have learnt.

Read the messages on a social media site and answer the questions.



Cissy Lam @CissyCissyLam

58m 

Does anyone know anything about Tiger Trails Jungle Camp? My friends and I want to go somewhere different for the upcoming holiday, but we can't decide where to go. I heard someone say the camp at Tiger Trails was quite fun, so I'd like to get more information about it.



Sam Castro @truesamcastro

52m 

I went to Tiger Trails last year. It was really boring — ① there was nothing to do at the camp, and they didn't take us anywhere. They said they'd teach us something about the environment, ② but we didn't learn anything from them. Worse still, my dad was kicked by a horse and nobody was there to help him! I'd suggest you go somewhere else.



Julia Nakatani @JNakatani0801

37m 

That's strange, Sam — we had a great time at Tiger Trails. The staff were really friendly, and there was always somebody around to help us. OK, it's quite expensive, but if you want this kind of holiday, nowhere is cheap.

- Circle all the indefinite pronouns and adverbs above.
- a) Give one example of using indefinite pronouns / adverbs as the subject of the sentence. Circle the subject in your answer.

Does anyone know anything about Tiger Trails Jungle Camp? / Nobody was there to help him! / Nowhere is cheap. (any one)

- The indefinite pronoun / adverb in 2(a) takes a singular verb.
- In the last sentence of Sam's message, 'somewhere else' means a different place.
 - Rewrite Part ① with a negative verb and Part ② with a positive verb.

Part ①: there wasn't anything to do at the camp

Part ②: but we learnt nothing from them

Let's practise

Exercise 1

Read the sentences. Circle the correct answers.

- Shall we order (somewhere / anything / **something**) to drink?
- There is (somebody / **nowhere** / anywhere) better than home.
- (**Is anything** / Are anything / Is somewhere) wrong, Julian? You look upset.
- I'm looking for (anyone / something / **someone**) who speaks Japanese.
- Peter rarely goes (somewhere / **anywhere** / nowhere) crowded.
- Shirley didn't talk to (no one / anything / **anybody**) this morning. She was in a bad mood.
- Shall we meet at the MTR station or (somewhere / anywhere / **somewhere else**)?
- (**No one** / Anyone / Nothing) knows where the missing girl is.
- Don't just sit there and do (anything / **nothing** / something)! Help me set the table.
- I think there is (**something** / anything / nothing) wrong with my mobile. Can you check it for me?

Exercise 1 provides practice of indefinite pronouns and adverbs.



Exercise 2

Jo is talking to Neil. Complete their conversation with suitable indefinite pronouns.

Jo: Are you OK, Neil? You don't look very happy.

Neil: Well, I'm worried about ⁽¹⁾ something – I have a Maths test next week, but I can hardly understand ⁽²⁾ anything in my textbook. I really need ⁽³⁾ someone/somebody to help me, but I don't know ⁽⁴⁾ anyone/anybody who's good at Maths. I asked my classmates, but ⁽⁵⁾ no one/nobody could help me. They're all really busy at the moment.

Jo: How about your mum or dad? Can they help you?

Neil: No, they don't know ⁽⁶⁾ anything about teaching Maths so there's ⁽⁷⁾ nothing they can do. Actually could you do ⁽⁸⁾ something for me, please? Could you recommend ⁽⁹⁾ someone/somebody to help me?

Jo: Well, I know ⁽¹⁰⁾ someone/somebody who's good at Maths. She's also a very good tutor!

Neil: Does she charge ⁽¹¹⁾ anything? I don't have much money.

Jo: She usually charges ⁽¹²⁾ something, but she never charges her friends ⁽¹³⁾ anything.

Neil: Really? ⁽¹⁴⁾ No one/Nobody gives free lessons! Who is this person?

Jo: Me! You don't need to pay me ⁽¹⁵⁾ anything. I'm always happy to help you.

Exercise 2 provides contextualised practice of indefinite pronouns.

Challenge yourself

Exercise 3

Exercise 3 provides contextualised practice of indefinite pronouns and adverbs.

Kay is chatting to Bill. Complete their text messages using suitable indefinite pronouns / adverbs and the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

Bill online   

Hi Bill. Are you going ⁽¹⁾ anywhere this weekend?

I'm going to take my Australian friend Chris out. I really want to take him ⁽²⁾ somewhere nice, but unfortunately I can't think of ⁽³⁾ anywhere to go (go). I asked my family for advice, but ⁽⁴⁾ no one/nobody could (can) give me any good suggestions.

Well, I'm sure there's ⁽⁵⁾ somewhere you can go.

I hope so. The problem is that Chris doesn't like to go ⁽⁶⁾ anywhere crowded or noisy, but there really ⁽⁷⁾ is nowhere/isn't anywhere (be) quiet in Hong Kong at the weekend!

That's not true! You can take him ⁽⁸⁾ somewhere in Sai Kung. There are lots of quiet beaches and hiking trails there.

That sounds good, but I seldom go ⁽⁹⁾ anywhere in Sai Kung. Do you know ⁽¹⁰⁾ anything about places to go there?

Yes. I go to Sai Kung quite often. Would you like ⁽¹¹⁾ someone/somebody to go (go) with you? I'm free this weekend, so I can go with you if you like.

Thanks a lot, Kay. It'll be good to have ⁽¹²⁾ someone/somebody to show (show) us around.

You're welcome. Shall I take you ⁽¹³⁾ somewhere for dinner in Sai Kung as well?

That'll be great!

