

# All, no, none

## Introduction



We interviewed **all** the candidates last week but **none** of them were suitable.  
We had **no** luck at all.

## Definition

**All**, **no** and **none** are quantifiers. **All** refers to the whole amount or quantity of something that is indicated. **No** and **none** refer to 'not any' or 'not one'.

## Construction

Here are some examples:

All	+ singular noun	[See note 4. below.]
	+ plural countable noun	<b>All</b> children like sweets.
	+ uncountable noun	<b>All</b> information will be provided.
	+ 'of' + plural or uncountable noun	<b>All</b> <u>of</u> my colleagues are English. <b>All</b> <u>of</u> the information was useful.
	+ 'of' + pronoun	<b>All</b> <u>of</u> them are English. <b>All</b> <u>of</u> it was useful.
	+ 'the', possessive adjective or determiner	<b>All</b> <u>the</u> invitations were sent. <b>All</b> <u>my</u> colleagues are English. <b>All</b> <u>these</u> computers are broken.
	without a noun	<b>All</b> is well.
No	+ singular noun	<b>No</b> child likes bedtime.
	+ plural countable noun	<b>No</b> children like bedtime.
	+ uncountable noun	<b>No</b> information was provided.
None	+ 'of' + plural or uncountable noun	<b>None</b> <u>of</u> my colleagues are English. <b>None</b> <u>of</u> the information was useful.
	+ 'of' + pronoun	<b>None</b> <u>of</u> them are English. <b>None</b> <u>of</u> it was useful.
	without a noun	<b>None</b> are English.

## Subject verb agreement

### 1. We can use either a singular or a plural verb with none and 'none of'.

In the following sentence, **none** could mean 'not one' [in a singular sense] or 'not **any**' [a plural

sense]. In formal written English, a singular verb is preferred but in conversation, we often use a plural verb:

- None of the delegates has/have responded to the invitations yet.

Sometimes, the context suggests a sense that’s clearly plural and a plural verb is required:

- Almost **none** of my colleagues work from home. [suggests a large number]
- **None** but the best are recruited by my company. [not talking about one person]

With uncountable nouns, we have to use a singular verb:

- They gave us a lot of information but **none** of it was very useful.

See [subject verb agreement](#) for more information.

**2. No can take either a singular or plural verb with the same meaning but a singular noun is more formal:**

- There was **no** computer in the meeting room.
- There were **no** computers in the meeting room.

**3. We can use ‘not’ with all to make negative sentences:**

- Not **all** of my colleagues are English.
- My colleagues aren’t **all** English.

But ‘not **all**’ does not have the same meaning as none:

- Not **all** of my colleagues are English. [but some of them are]
- **None** of my colleagues are English. [I have no English colleagues]

**4. We can use a singular noun with all when we are referring to periods of time:**

- I spent **all** week working on that report.
- I waited **all** morning for him to call but he didn’t.

## Uses

	Uses	Examples
All	To talk about a whole amount	We drank all the water.
	To talk about every person or object	We ate all the sandwiches.
	To mean ‘the only thing(s)’	All I’ve eaten today is a sandwich – I’m so hungry.
	With time periods	I was busy all day.
No	To mean ‘not any’ or ‘not one’	There’s no milk in the fridge. There are no men in this team.
	When something is forbidden	“No smoking in this building.”
None	To mean ‘not any’ or ‘not one’	There’s none in the fridge. There are none in this team.

## With 'of'

We can use 'of' with **all** when we are referring to a more specific quantity or amount. For example:

- **All** cars need fuel or electrical power. [cars generally]
- **All** of the cars in this country use petrol or diesel. [specific cars]

### Note that

#### 1. Unlike some other quantifiers e.g some, many, few, little, 'of' isn't necessary with all when we are being specific

- All the cars in this country use petrol or diesel. ✓
- All of the cars in this country use petrol or diesel. ✓

#### 2. We can use 'no' generally and 'none of' specifically. For example:

- No cars were manufactured in the US from 1942-1946. [any cars]
- None of the cars in this company is more than two years old. [specific cars]

We can't use 'of' + noun. We need to use 'the', a demonstrative, a pronoun or a possessive adjective.

- All of friends live near me. ✗
- All(of) my friends live near me. ✓
- I like none of books. ✗
- I like none of these books. ✓

## 'All' or 'everything' or 'everyone/everybody'?

**All** isn't often used without a noun and it's sometimes incorrect to do this:

- I told all in the sales department. ✗
- I told everyone in the sales department. ✓
- I finished all. ✗
- I finished everything. ✓

However, we can use **all** in this kind of sentence:

- I told them **all** I know.
- I told them everything I know.

Or with 'about:

- I told them all about the new project.
- I told them everything about the new project.

## 'All the time' or 'every time'?

'All the time' means 'continuously' or 'often':

- This production line is in operation **all** the time. [around the clock; it never stops]
- He complains about his job **all** the time. [often, a lot]

'Every time' means 'on each occasion':

- I stay in the same hotel every time I go to London.
- Every time I hear that song, I feel happier.

## 'No'/'none (of)' or 'not a/any'

These have the same meaning but **no** and '**none** of' are considered more emphatic:

Neutral	Emphatic
There isn't any milk.	There's <b>no</b> chocolate!
He didn't have any of the skills we required.	He had <b>none</b> of the skills we required - he was useless!

Be careful not to use double negatives:

- There isn't no useful information. ❌
- He didn't have none of the skills. ❌
- I haven't never been to China. ❌

## Word order

**All** can be placed later than a noun in a sentence as well as in front of the noun:

- My friends **all** live near me. = **All** my friends live near me.
- We are **all** going to London tomorrow. = **All** of us are going to London tomorrow.

## Common expressions with 'no'

There are a lot of informal, conversational expressions with **no** + noun. Here are some examples:

Expression	Meaning	Examples
No wonder	A lack of surprise	<b>No</b> wonder he didn't pass the test - he never works hard enough.
No idea	A complete lack of knowledge	"Where's Jean?"
		" <b>No</b> idea."
		I have <b>no</b> idea what to do next.

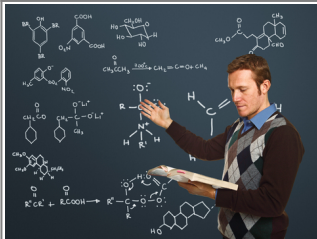


No comment	A refusal to answer a question – often used by people interviewed by journalists or by the police	“Where were you on the night of 26 <sup>th</sup> September?” “No comment.”
No way	Great surprise or disbelief	“They agreed to sign the contract.” “No way!”
	Not in any circumstances	No way am I going to work on Saturday.
No chance	Certainly not/no possibility	“Do you think you’ll finish that by Friday?” “No chance.”
No problem	No difficulty or reason to be upset	“Can you help me with this later?” “Of course, no problem.”
		“I’m sorry, I have to leave early.” “No problem, see you tomorrow.”
		“Thanks, it was kind of you to help.” “No problem.”
	In response to ‘thank you’	“No problem.”

## Intensifiers

We can use intensifiers to give extra information. Here are some examples:

	all	no	none
‘Almost’ and words with a similar meaning such as ‘nearly’ and ‘virtually’. ‘Almost none/no’ has a similar meaning to ‘hardly any’.	They ate nearly <b>all</b> the sandwiches.	We have virtually <b>no</b> time to finish this.	Almost <b>none</b> of our clients speak French.

## Examples

	I’m afraid there’s no easy solution to this.
	“How do you like your tea?” “Milk, no sugar, thanks.”
	There’s no swimming here.



All I've done today is write this report - I've had absolutely no time to check my email!



Please change this one to: He ate all the cake - there's none left.



I think we have all we need now - let's start.



None of my previous jobs were as stressful as this one.



He was awake all night.

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