**Quantifiers**

Quantifiers say how much or how many we are talking about. The most important are: some, any, no, each, every, either, neither, much, many, more, most, (a) little, less, least, (a) few, fewer, fewest, enough, several, all, both, half, what, whatever, which, whichever.

Some of these are used with singular nouns (e.g. each), some with plurals (e.g. many), some with uncountable nouns (e.g. much), and some with more than one kind of nouns (e.g. which).

* **Much, many, little, few, a lot, plenty**

A. We use **much** and **little** with uncountable nouns:

e.g. much time much luck little energy little money

We use **many** and **few** with plural nouns:

e.g.many friends many people few cars few countries

B. We use **a lot of/lots of/plenty of** with uncountable and plural nouns:

e.g. a lot of luck lots of time plenty of money a lot of friends lots of people plenty of ideas

**Plenty** = more than enough:

There's no need to hurry. We've got **plentyof** time. I've had **plenty** to eat. I don't want any more.

C. We use **much**/**many** especially in negative sentences and questions. **A lot (of)** is also possible:

We didn't spend **much** money. (or We didn't spend a lot of money.)

Do you know **many** people? (or Do you know a lot of people?)

I don't go out **much**. (or I don't go out a lot.)

In positive sentences **a lot (of)** is more usual. **Much** is unusual in positive sentences in spoken English:

We spent **a lot of** money. (not 'We spent **much** money')

He goes out **a lot**. (not 'He goes out **much'**)

You can use **many** in positive sentences, but a lot (of) is more usual in spoken English:

A lot of people (or Many people) drive too fast.

But note that we use **too much** and **somuch** in positive sentences:

We spent **toomuch** money.

D. **Little** and **few** (without 'a') are **undesirable**ideas (= not much/not many):

We must be quick. There is little time. (= not much, not enough time)

He isn't popular. He has few friends. (= not many, not enough friends)

You can say very little and very few: There is very little time. He has very few friends.

**A little** and **a few** are more positive:

1. **A little** = some, a small amount:

Let's go and have a drink. We've got **a little** time before the train leaves.

(a little time = some time, **enough** time to have a drink)

A: 'Do you speak English? B: A little. (so we can talk a bit)

2**. A few** = some, a small number:

I enjoy my life here. I have **a few** friends and we meet quite often.

(a few friends = not many but enough to have a good time)

'When did you last see Clare?  **A few** days ago.' (= some days ago)

Compare: 1. He spoke little English, so it was difficult to communicate with him.

2. He spoke a little English, so we were able to communicate with him.

1. She's lucky. She has few problems. (= not many problems)

2. Things are not going so well for her. She has a few problems. (= some problems)

Note that **'only a little'** and '**only a few'** have a negative meaning:

We must be quick. We've only got a little time.

The village was very small. There were only a few houses.

* **Some and any**

A. In general we use some (also somebody/someone/something) in positive sentences and any (also anybody etc.) in negative sentences.

1. **Some**

We bought some flowers. He's busy. He's got some work to do.

There's somebody at the door. I'm hungry. I want something to eat.

2. **Any**

We didn't buy any flowers. He's lazy. He never does any work.

There isn't anybody at the door. I'm not hungry. I don't want anything to eat.

We use **any** in the following sentences because the meaning is negative:

She went out without **any** money. (She didn't take any money with her.)

He refused to eat **anything**. (He didn't eat anything.)

Hardly **anybody** passed the examination. (= almost nobody passed)

B. In most questions we use any:

Have you got any luggage?' 'No, I haven't.' 'Has anybody seen my bag?' 'Yes, it's under the table.'

But we use **some** in questions when we expect the answer 'yes':

What's wrong? Have you got **something** in your eye?

(It seems that you have got something in your eye and I expect you to answer 'yes'.)

We use some in questions when we offer or ask for things:

Would you like something to eat? Can I have some sugar, please?

C. We often use **any** after if:

If there are **any** letters for me, can you send them on to this address?

If anyone has any questions, I'll be pleased to answer them.

Let me know if you need anything.

The following sentences have the idea of if:

I'm sorry for any trouble I've caused. (= if I have caused any trouble)

Anyone who wants to do the exam must give me their names today. (= if there is anyone)

D. We also use any with the meaning **'it doesn't matter which**':

You can catch any bus. They all go to the centre. (= it doesn't matter which bus you catch)

'Sing a song.' 'Which song shall I sing?' 'Any song. I don't mind.' (= it doesn't matter which song)

Come and see me any time you want.

Let's go out somewhere.' '

Where shall we go?' 'Anywhere. I don't mind.'

We left the door unlocked. Anybody could have come in.

Compare *something* and *anything*:

A: I'm hungry. I want something to eat.

B: What would you like?

A: I don't mind. Anything. (= something, but it doesn't matter what)

E. **Somebody**/**someone**/**anybody**/**anyone** are singular words:

Someone is here to see you.

But we often use **they**/**them**/**their** after these words:

Someone has forgotten their umbrella. (= his or her umbrella)

If anybody wants to leave early, they can. (= he or she can)

**Both/both of neither/neither of either/either of**

A. We use both/neither/either for two things. You can use these words with a noun (both books, neither book etc.) For example, you are talking about going out to eat this evening. There are two restaurants where you can go. You say: \* Both restaurants are very good. (not 'the both restaurants')

\* Neither restaurant is expensive. \* We can go to either restaurant. I don't mind. (either = one or the other, it doesn't matter which one)

B. Both of .../neither of .../either of ...

When you use both/neither/either + of, you always need the .../these/those .../my/your/his/ Tom's... (etc.). You cannot say 'both of restaurants'. You have to say 'both of the restaurants', 'both of those restaurants' etc.:

\* Both of these restaurants are very good. \* Neither of the restaurants we went to was (or were) expensive.

\* I haven't been to either of those restaurants. (= I haven't been to one or the other)

You don't need **of** after **both**. So you can say: Both my parents are from London. or Both of my parents...

You can use both of/neither of/either of + us/you/them:

(talking to two people) Can either of you speak Spanish? I asked two people the way to the station but neither of them knew. You must say 'both of' before us/you/them (of is necessary): \* Both of us were very tired. (not 'Both us were ...')

* **All, every and whole**

A. All and everybody/everyone We do not normally use all to mean everybody/everyone:

Everybody enjoyed the party. (not 'All enjoyed...')

But note that we say all of us/you/them, not 'everybody of...': \*

All of us enjoyed the party. (not 'everybody of us')

B. All and everything Sometimes you can use all or everything:

I'll do all I can to help. or I'll do everything I can to help.

You can say 'all I can'/'all you need' etc. but we do not normally use all alone:

He thinks he knows everything. (not 'he knows all') \* Our holiday was a disaster. Everything went wrong. (not 'All went wrong')

We use **all** in the expression all about: \* They told us all about their holiday.

We also use all (not 'everything') to mean the only thing(s): \* All I've eaten today is a sandwich. (= the only thing I've eaten today)

C. **Every**/**everybody**/**everyone**/**everything** are singular words, so we use a singular verb:

Every seat in the theatre was taken. \* Everybody has arrived. (not 'have arrived')

But we often use they/them/their after everybody/everyone:

Everybody said they enjoyed themselves. (= he or she enjoyed himself or herself)

* **Each and every**

A. **Each** and **every** are similar in meaning. Often it is possible to use each or every:

Each time (or Every time) I see you, you took different.

There's a telephone in each room (or every room) of the house.

But each and every are not exactly the same. Study the difference:

#1 We use each when we think of things separately, one by one.

Study each sentence carefully. (= study the sentences one by one)

Each is more usual for a small number:

\* There were four books on the table. Each book was a different colour.

(In a card game) At the beginning of the game, each player has three cards.

#2 We use every when we think of things as a group. The meaning is similar to all.

Every sentence must have a verb(= all sentences in general) Every is more usual for a large number:

Carol loves reading. She has read every book in the library. (=all the books)

I would like to visit every country in the world. (=all the countries)

Each (but not every) can be used for two things:

In a football match, each team has 11 players. (not 'every team')

We use every (not each) to say how often something happens:

'How often do you go shopping?' 'Every day.' (not 'each day')

There's a bus every ten minutes. (not 'each ten minutes') .