

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 going out to eat. There are two possible restaurants. 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)

You can also use **both/neither/either** alone, *without* a noun:

- ☐ I couldn't decide which of the two shirts to buy. I liked **both**. (*or* I liked **both** of them.)
- ☐ 'Is your friend British or American?' '**Neither**. She's Australian.'
- ☐ 'Do you want tea or coffee?' '**Either**. I don't mind.'

B

**Both of ... / neither of ... / either of ...**

We use **both of / neither of / either of + the/these/my/Tom's ...** etc. So we say 'both of **the** restaurants', 'both of **those** restaurants' etc. (*but not* both of restaurants):

- ☐ **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 Egypt. *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 Russian?
- ☐ I asked two people the way to the station, but **neither of them** could help me.

You must say 'both **of**' before **us/you/them**:

- ☐ **Both of us** were very tired. (*not* Both us were ...)

After **neither of ...** a *singular* or a *plural* verb is possible:

- ☐ Neither of the children **wants** (*or want*) to go to bed.

C

You can say:

**both ... and ...**

- ☐ **Both Chris and** Paul were late.
- ☐ I was **both** tired **and** hungry when I arrived home.

**neither ... nor ...**

- ☐ **Neither Chris nor** Paul came to the party.
- ☐ There was an accident in the street where we live, but we **neither** saw **nor** heard anything.

**either ... or ...**

- ☐ I'm not sure where Maria's from. She's **either** Spanish **or** Italian.
- ☐ **Either** you apologise, **or** I'll never speak to you again.

D

Compare **either/neither/both** (two things) and **any/none/all** (more than two):

- ☐ There are **two** good hotels here.  
You could stay at **either** of them.
- ☐ We tried **two** hotels.  
  { **Neither** of them had any rooms.  
  { **Both** of them were full.

- ☐ There are **many** good hotels here.  
You could stay at **any** of them.
- ☐ We tried **a lot of** hotels.  
  { **None** of them had any rooms.  
  { **All** of them were full.