

## Some and any

A

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

**some**

- ☐ We bought **some** flowers.
- ☐ He's busy. He's got **some** work to do.
- ☐ There's **somebody** at the door.
- ☐ I want **something** to eat.

**any**

- ☐ We didn't buy **any** flowers.
- ☐ He's lazy. He **never** does **any** work.
- ☐ There isn't **anybody** at the door.
- ☐ 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**)
- ☐ It's a very easy exam. **Hardly anybody** fails. (= almost **nobody** fails)

B

We use both **some** and **any** in questions. We use **some/somebody/something** to talk about a person or thing that we know exists, or we think exists:

- ☐ Are you waiting for **somebody**? (I think you are waiting for somebody)

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

- ☐ Would you like **something** to eat? (there is something to eat)
- ☐ Can I have **some** sugar, please? (there is probably some sugar I can have)

But in most questions, we use **any**. We do not know if the thing or person exists:

- ☐ 'Do you have **any** luggage?' 'No, I don't.'
- ☐ I can't find my bag. Has **anybody** seen it?

C

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

- ☐ **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 should tell me by Friday. (= if there is anyone)

D

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

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

We use **anybody/anyone/anything/anywhere** in the same way:

- ☐ We forgot to lock the door. **Anybody** could have come in.
- ☐ 'Let's go out somewhere.' 'Where shall we go?' '**Anywhere**. I just want to go out.'

Compare **something** and **anything**:

- ☐ A: I'm hungry. I want **something** to eat.  
B: What would you like?  
A: I don't mind. **Anything**. (= it doesn't matter what)

E

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

- ☐ **Someone** is here to see you.

But we 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)