

Unit 84

Some and any

Some/any + -one/-body/-thing/-where

a In general we use **some** in positive sentences and **any** in negative sentences (but see also sections **b** and **d**):

- Ann has bought **some** new shoes.
- They haven't got **any** children.
- I've got **something** in my eye.
- He's lazy. He **never** does **any** work.

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

- He left home **without any** money. (He didn't have any money.)
- She **refused to say anything**. (She didn't say anything.)

b We often use **any/anyone/anything** etc. after **if**:

- **If any** letters arrive for me, can you send them to this address?
- **If anyone** has any questions, I'll be pleased to answer them.
- **If you need anything**, just ask.
- Buy some pears **if you see any**.

The following sentences are without **if**, but they have the idea of **if**:

- **Anyone** who wants to do the examination must give me their names before Friday. (= if there is anyone who ...)
- I'll send on **any letters** that arrive for you. (= if there are any)

c In questions we usually use **any** (not 'some'):

- Have you got **any** money?
- Has **anybody** seen Tom?

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

- What's wrong with your eye? Have you got **something** in it? (= I think you have got something in your eye and I expect you to say 'yes')

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

- Would you like **some** tea?
- Can I have **some** of those apples?

d **Any** also has another meaning. **Any/anyone/anybody/anything/anywhere** can mean **it doesn't matter which/who/what/where**:

- You can catch **any of these buses**. They all go to the centre. (= it doesn't matter which of these buses)
- Come and see me **any time** you want. (= it doesn't matter when)
- You can have **anything you want** for your birthday present.
- We left the door unlocked. **Anybody** could have come in.
- I'd rather go **anywhere** than stay at home during my holiday.
- 'Sing a song.' 'Which song shall I sign?' '**Any** song. I don't mind.'

e **Someone/somebody/anyone/anybody** are singular words:

- **Someone** wants to see you.
- **Is** anybody there?

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

- **If anyone** wants to leave early, **they** can. (= he or she can)
- **Somebody** has spilt **their** (= his or her) coffee on the carpet.

For **some of / any of** see **Unit 82**. For **not ... any** see **Unit 85**.

