



Indefinite Pronouns: Some-, Any- and No- Compounds: Basic Rules

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

1. There is ___ at the door. Can you open it?
a) somebody
b) nobody
c) anybody
d) nothing
2. I can't find my keys ____. I've looked everywhere!
a) somewhere
b) nowhere
c) anywhere
d) everywhere
3. ___ called while you were out, but they didn't leave a message.
a) Anyone
b) Someone
c) No one
d) Everyone
4. Is there ___ in the fridge? I'm hungry.
a) something
b) everything
c) nothing
d) anything
5. She said ___ about the party. It was a complete surprise.
a) anything
b) nothing
c) something
d) everything
6. I don't know ___ about quantum physics.
a) anything
b) nothing
c) something
d) everything
7. ___ knows the answer. The question is too difficult.
a) Everybody
b) Anybody
c) Somebody
d) Nobody
8. I put my glasses ___ on the desk, but now they're gone.
a) anywhere
b) nowhere
c) somewhere
d) everywhere
9. Did ___ see what happened?
a) someone
b) no one
c) anyone
d) everyone
10. There was ___ wrong with the engine, so the mechanic fixed it.
a) anything
b) nothing
c) everything
d) something
11. She didn't tell ___ about her plans.
a) anyone
b) someone
c) no one
d) everyone



Answers

1. a) somebody
2. c) anywhere
3. b) Someone
4. d) anything
5. b) nothing
6. a) anything
7. d) Nobody
8. c) somewhere
9. c) anyone
10. d) something
11. a) anyone
12. b) nothing
13. d) somewhere
14. b) anything
15. c) Somebody
16. a) nothing
17. a) anybody
18. c) nothing
19. d) something
20. b) anywhere



Explanations

1. “somebody” (a)

This is an affirmative sentence stating a fact — someone is at the door — so we use the some- compound 'somebody'.

2. “anywhere” (c)

The sentence contains 'can't' (negative), so we use the any- compound 'anywhere'. In negative sentences, any- is the correct choice.

3. “Someone” (b)

The speaker knows that a call happened (affirmative fact), so we use the some- compound 'Someone'. The identity is unknown, but the event is certain.

4. “anything” (d)

This is a question, so we use the any- compound 'anything'. In questions where we don't know the answer, any- is standard.

5. “nothing” (b)

The verb 'said' has no negative word (no 'didn't'), so we need the no- compound 'nothing' to express negation. 'She said nothing' = 'She didn't say anything.'

6. “anything” (a)

The sentence already has 'don't' (negative), so we use 'anything'. Using 'nothing' here would create a double negative, which is incorrect in standard English.

7. “Nobody” (d)

The second sentence explains that the question is too difficult, so no person knows the answer. We use 'Nobody' with the affirmative verb 'knows' to express this negation.

8. “somewhere” (c)

The speaker is stating an affirmative fact — the glasses were placed in a location on the desk — so we use 'somewhere'.

9. “anyone” (c)

This is a genuine question — the speaker doesn't know if a witness exists — so we use the any- compound 'anyone'.

10. “something” (d)

This is an affirmative sentence — a problem existed, and it was fixed — so we use 'something'.

11. “anyone” (a)

The sentence has 'didn't' (negative), so we use the any- compound 'anyone'. Using 'no one' with 'didn't' would create a double negative.

12. “nothing” (b)

The sentence has no negative word ('There is...'), and the context tells us the box is empty, so we use the no- compound 'nothing' to express the negation.

13. “somewhere” (d)

This is an affirmative sentence expressing a need, so we use the some- compound 'somewhere'.

14. “anything” (b)

The sentence has 'don't' (negative), so we use the any- compound 'anything'. This avoids the double negative that 'nothing' would create.

15. “Somebody” (c)

The speaker states an affirmative fact — an umbrella was found, so a person must have left it — so we use 'Somebody'.

16. “nothing” (a)

The verb 'was' is affirmative (no 'wasn't'), and the context tells us no tables were free, so we use the no-compound 'nothing'. 'There was nothing available' = 'There wasn't anything available.'

17. “anybody” (a)

This is a question where the speaker doesn't know if people are interested, so we use the any- compound 'anybody'.

18. “nothing” (c)

The verb 'has' is affirmative (no 'doesn't'), and the context tells us there are no secrets, so we use 'nothing'. 'He has nothing to hide' means he is open and honest.

19. “something” (d)

The speaker is stating an affirmative fact — a strange sound was heard — so we use 'something'.

20. “anywhere” (b)

The sentence has 'didn't' (negative), so we need the any- compound 'anywhere'. Using 'nowhere' with 'didn't' would create an incorrect double negative.