

Focus: Expressing duality, Positive vs. negative choice, Noun-pronoun placement, Usage with pronouns (us, you, them), Determiners (the, these, my), Optional 'of' with 'both', both ... and ..., neither ... nor ..., either ... or ..., either/neither/both (two things)

When talking about **two** people or things, we use specific quantifiers. We cannot use *all*, *none*, or *any* (those are for 3+ things).

1. BOTH (2 out of 2) - Positive

- **Meaning:** The first one AND the second one.
- **Verb:** Always takes a **plural** verb.
- **Structure:**
 - **Before a noun:** Both (of) + determiner + noun
 - *Ex: Both (of) my brothers are tall.*
 - **Before a pronoun:** Both of + us/you/them (Note: "Of" is **mandatory** here).
 - *Ex: Both of us are ready.*
 - **Correlative:** Both A and B
 - *Ex: She speaks both English and Spanish.*

2. NEITHER (0 out of 2) - Negative

- **Meaning:** Not the first one AND not the second one.
- **Verb:** Usually takes a **positive singular** verb (because "neither" carries the negative meaning).
- **Structure:**
 - **Before a noun:** Neither of + determiner + plural noun
 - *Ex: Neither of the answers is correct.*
 - **Before a pronoun:** Neither of + us/you/them
 - *Ex: Neither of them knew the way.*
 - **Correlative:** Neither A nor B
 - *Ex: Neither John nor his sister is at home.*

3. EITHER (1 out of 2) - Choice/Alternative

- **Meaning:** One OR the other (it doesn't matter which one).
- **Verb:** Usually takes a **singular** verb.
- **Structure:**
 - **Before a noun:** Either of + determiner + plural noun
 - *Ex: You can park on either side of the street.* (Note: singular noun after 'Either' directly).
 - *Ex: Either of the tables is fine.*
 - **Before a pronoun:** Either of + us/you/them
 - *Ex: Do either of you have a pen?*
 - **Correlative:** Either A or B
 - *Ex: We can eat either pasta or pizza.*

4. The "Of" Rule

- When using **Both/Neither/Either** directly before a noun with no determiner (the/my/these), do **not** use "of".
 - *Correct: Both students / Neither student.*
- When using a determiner (the/my/these/those) or an object pronoun (us/you/them), you usually need **of** (though it is optional for "Both" before determiners).
 - *Correct: Neither of my parents.*
 - *Correct: Both of them.*

Practice: Fill in the Blanks

Instructions: Complete the sentences using **both**, **neither**, **either**, or the connecting words (**of**, **and**, **nor**, **or**). Read the context carefully to decide between positive (both), negative (neither), or choice (either).

1. I have two sisters. _____ of them are married and live in London.
2. I tried on two shirts, but _____ of them fit me properly. They were too small.
3. You can choose _____ the chocolate cake _____ the vanilla cake. You cannot have two.
4. _____ of us wanted to cook, so we decided to order a pizza instead.
5. He plays _____ football _____ tennis very well. He is a talented athlete in two sports.
6. "Which of these two books is better?" / "I don't know. I haven't read _____ of them."
7. _____ Sarah _____ her husband could come to the party because they were sick.
8. _____ my parents is a doctor. My dad is an engineer and my mom is a teacher. (Careful: This means 0 out of 2).
9. Does _____ of you have a charger I can borrow? My phone is dead.
10. It was a very boring film. It was _____ too long _____ the acting was bad.
11. I have seen the movie twice, but I didn't understand it _____ time. (Meaning: one or the other).
12. _____ the manager _____ the assistant manager is available to help you right now. Please wait.
13. I invited Tom and Jerry, but _____ of them showed up. I was all alone.
14. She has two children. _____ of them go to the same school.
15. You can sit on _____ side of the boat; the view is beautiful from everywhere.

Answer Key

1. **Both** (Positive context, two sisters).
2. **neither** (Negative context, "too small").
3. **either ... or** (Choice context).
4. **Neither** (Negative context implied by ordering pizza instead).
5. **both ... and** (Positive context, talented in two sports).
6. **either** (Used with "haven't" - negative verb requires "either").
7. **Neither ... nor** (Negative context, they were sick).
8. **Neither of** (Negative context, 0 out of 2).
9. **either** (Question context, asking 1 of 2 people).
10. **neither ... nor** (Negative/Bad qualities listing).
11. **either** (Singular time implies one or the other).
12. **Neither ... nor** OR **Either ... or** (Both are grammatically possible, but "Neither...nor" implies nobody is there, "Either...or" implies one is available. Based on "Please wait," likely **Neither...nor** is intended, but **Either...or** is acceptable structure).
13. **neither** (Negative context, "all alone").
14. **Both** (Positive context, plural verb "go").
15. **either** (Choice context, singular noun "side").