

THE FLATMATES

Language point:
Somebody, anybody,
nobody, everybody



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BBC Learning English – The Flatmates

The Flatmates – Somebody, anybody, nobody, everybody

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Every, some, any, no

'Every', 'some', 'any' and 'no' can be used with 'one', 'body' and 'thing' to form compound pronouns, such as **everyone**, **somebody**, **anything** and **nothing**.

'Every', 'some', 'any' and 'no' can also be used with 'where' to form adverbs such as **everywhere**, **somewhere** and **anywhere**.

Pronouns such as **somebody**, **nothing** and **everything** usually take a **singular verb**, even though they may seem to refer to more than one thing.

Don't touch that computer: **somebody is** using it.

Don't worry. **Nothing has** happened.

Is everything ready for the party?

Everybody has arrived.

However, after **everyone/everybody**, we use **they/their/them**, even though the verb is singular.

Everyone has to take **their** shoes off before they come in.

Could **everybody** please put **their** names on the list?

Everybody enjoyed **themselves** at the party.

Somebody, someone, something, somewhere

These words refer to a person, thing or place, without identifying **which** person, thing or place.

somebody / someone: an unidentified person

something: an unidentified thing

somewhere: an unidentified place

Alice says '**there's something** I want to ask you.' She is saying that she has a question, but she hasn't yet identified the topic of the question. When she says: '**There's somebody else**, isn't there?' this is a positive statement, followed by a question tag. Alice is saying that she believes that Paul is seeing another woman, but she doesn't know who.

More examples:

Somebody called yesterday, but I don't know who it was.

He had **something** to eat before he went home.

Have you seen my phone? I put it down **somewhere** and now I can't find it.

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Anybody, anyone, anything, anywhere

These words are used in **questions** and **negative sentences**, to refer to a person, thing or place, without identifying **which** person, thing or place.

anybody / anyone: an unidentified person

anything: an unidentified thing

anywhere: an unidentified place

Are you seeing **anybody** else?

I've just moved to a new town, and I don't know **anyone**.

I haven't had **anything** to eat since I arrived.

'**any-**' words are also used to express **conditions**:

'You can park **anywhere**' = 'if you need a place to park, use one of these spaces.'

'It's easy to find. Ask **anyone**' = 'if you can't find it, ask someone: everybody knows where it is.'

Nobody, no-one, nothing, nowhere

These words are used in positive sentences, but they have negative meanings: they refer to an **absence** of people, things or place. **No-one** is written with a **hyphen** between the two 'o's.

Nobody knows where it is.

No-one came to the party.

He says he knows **nothing** about the crime.

They are homeless. They have **nowhere** to live.

Everybody, everyone, everything, everywhere

These words are used to refer to **all** people, things or places. **Everybody** and **everyone** have the same meaning.

Everybody likes chocolate.

Everything closes at the end of the holiday season.

We need to tidy up. There's rubbish **everywhere**.

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Vocabulary

to confess

to tell somebody that you have done something that you think is bad, or that you feel guilty about

to be seeing each other

to be having a romantic relationship

what's going on?

what's happening?

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