

Indefinite Pronouns

Language Focus

- Indefinite pronouns refer to people or things without saying exactly who or what they are.

everyone	everybody	everything
someone	somebody	something
anyone	anybody	anything
no one / no-one	nobody	nothing

- “Everywhere”, “anywhere”, “somewhere” and “nowhere” are indefinite adverbs, rather than indefinite pronouns.
- When an indefinite pronoun is the subject, it always takes a singular verb, even when it refers to more than one person or thing.
e.g. Everyone has to follow the rules in the dormitory.
- When you refer back to indefinite pronouns, you use plural pronouns or possessives, and a plural verb.
e.g. You can ask anyone in the office. They will tell you.
- Never use indefinite pronouns beginning with “no-” with another negative word in the same clause.
e.g. Nothing like this will be accepted. (not “will not be”)

A. Complete the sentences with correct indefinite pronouns.

1. Not _____ enjoys life in a dormitory.
2. Look! _____ has left a room key on the table.
3. I'm thirsty. I must get _____ to drink.
4. Apart from the canteen, is there _____ I can buy food?
5. We are new to the dormitory so we know _____ about it yet. Is there _____ who can help us?
6. The telephone with which you can make long-distance call is located near the Lost Property Office.
7. You have to show your Student ID card if you want to borrow _____ from the Dormitory Office.
8. _____ is responsible for the loss of your property, except you.
9. _____ who is found smoking in the dormitory will be given a warning letter.

B. Proofread the sentences to see if they are correct. If there is a mistake, underline it and write the correct answer in the space provided. If there is no mistake, put a ✓.

e.g. A warden is anyone who is in charge of a particular building.

someone

1. Never give your room key to someone.
2. The dormitory library is open to everybody.
3. You shouldn't do nothing to damage the property of the dormitory.
4. If you want to get something to drink, you can go to the pantry at the end of the corridor.
5. If you find it too noisy here, you can go anywhere else.
6. Is there everywhere I can make a long distance phone call?
7. Anyone should lock their room when they go out.
8. Someone who brings a pet to the dormitory will be given a warning letter.
9. Anyone who have lost their personal belongings can go to the lost property office.
10. You can find the common room something near the washroom.

C. Rewrite the sentences using the indefinite pronoun provided. Keep the meaning unchanged. Sometimes you have to change the verb as well.

e.g. Is there a person who can show me the way to the dormitory? (anyone)

Is there anyone who can show me the way to the dormitory?

1. There is a place where you can take a good rest. (somewhere)

2. You can go nowhere without your Student ID card. (anywhere)

3. You can see "No Smoking" signs in many places. (everywhere)

4. All the people in the Dormitory Office are very helpful. (Everybody)

5. Students should not keep a large amount of cash in the dormitory. (Nobody)

6. Go to the Lost Property Office if you have lost your things. (something)

7. Students who want to make use of the library on Sunday should inform the librarian 2 days before. (Anyone)

