

Determiners (some & any)

What are some and any?

Some and *any* are determiners. We use these words before nouns in order to add meaning. Other determiners which you may recognize are *both*, *every*, *many*, *most*, and *no*. *Some* and *any* don't refer to a definite quantity or number. For example:

(definite quantity/number) I have two books.

(indefinite) I have *some* English books. = I have books, but maybe 2 or 3... maybe more.

(definite quantity/number) She visited two countries last spring.

(indefinite) She visited *some* countries. = She went to 2, 3, or possibly more countries.

What is the sentence structure?

Both *some* and *any* appear before nouns. For example:

He couldn't get *any* tickets for the concert.

Some people like the taste of beer, but I can't stand it.

Some and *any* also are often linked with the following words:

some/any + body: *Somebody* stole my pen!

some/any + one: I want to marry *someone* rich and handsome!

some/any + thing: Would you like *something* to drink?

some/any + where: He didn't go *anywhere* for vacation, did he?

How are some and any used?

Any is used in the following situations:

1. In question sentences, such as: Is *anyone* there?
2. In negative sentences. For example: I don't have *any* money this month.
3. When the number/quantity isn't important: I'm so hungry, I could eat just about *anything*!

Some is used in the following situations:

1. In positive sentences. For example: I want to go *somewhere* exciting.
2. When the number/quantity isn't important. For example: I bought *some* CDs yesterday.

Is there any additional information on some and any?

Yes. Both words may be used with countable and uncountable nouns. Here are some examples:

(countable noun) He bought *some* sandwiches for lunch.

(countable noun) He didn't see *any* stars when he visited Hollywood.

(uncountable noun) He ate *some* cheese with his sandwiches.

(uncountable noun) He never drinks *any* coffee at night because then he can't sleep.

In addition, *some* may be used in question sentences. We do this when we expect the answer to be "yes." We also do this when we are offering or asking for something.

A: Did you bring back some wine when you visited France?

B: Of course I did. I got a few reds that I'm excited about.

We also do this when we are offering or asking for something.

A: Would you like some coffee?

B: Yes, I would. Thank you.

A: Can I have something to drink? I'm thirsty.

B: Sure. What do you want?

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