

# Using the Correct Negative

Negatives are words or phrases that mean *no* or *not*. For example, *nobody* means *no person*. Common negative words and phrases include:

**no, not, nobody, never, nothing, no one, nor, nowhere, none, cannot, isn't, didn't, won't wasn't, and any other contraction with n't.**

Correct sentences should have only one negative in them.

**Incorrect:** I don't see nobody.

**Correct:** I don't see anybody.

The incorrect example above has two negatives: *don't* and *nobody*. Two negatives in a sentence is called a double negative.

Circle the correct word to use in each sentence below.

1. Don't let ( anybody    nobody ) find out the secret.
2. She couldn't find the book ( anywhere    nowhere ).
3. My brother doesn't listen to ( anyone    no one )
4. Rebecca ( could    couldn't ) laugh no more.
5. The dog ( is    isn't ) no hunter.
6. The teacher does not want ( any    no ) messy papers.
7. He ( can    can't ) call no one for a week.
8. It shouldn't make ( any    no ) difference what your name is.
9. Rupert ( was    wasn't ) under no spell.
10. Daniel ( should    shouldn't ) never have tried to climb the tree.

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