

Lesson 31: Negatives

LEARN

- A **negative** is a word that means “no.” The words *not*, *nobody*, *nothing*, *nowhere*, and *never* are negatives. The words *don't*, *won't*, and other contractions made with *not* are also negatives.

You are **not** alone.

Don't give up hope!

- Do not use two negatives together in one sentence. To correct a sentence with two negatives, take out one negative or replace it with a word such as *any*, *ever*, *anything*, *anywhere*, or *anyone*.

INCORRECT I **don't** want **no** advice.

CORRECT I **don't** want advice.

I **don't** want **any** advice.

INCORRECT I **don't never** give up hope.

CORRECT I **don't** give up hope.

I **don't ever** give up hope.



PRACTICE

A Write the negative word in each sentence.

1. Money doesn't grow on trees. _____

2. Winners never quit. _____

3. There is no time like the present. _____

4. Don't give up the ship! _____

5. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. _____

PRACTICE A *continued*

6. We have nowhere to go but up. _____
7. That's not fair! _____
8. Rome wasn't built in a day. _____
9. Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth,
and nothing but the truth? _____
10. Nobody knows the trouble I've seen. _____

B *Write the word in () that correctly completes each sentence.*

1. There isn't _____ new under the sun.
(nothing, anything)
2. There _____ no place like home. (is, isn't)
3. I cannot tell _____ lie. (no, a)
4. Don't _____ put off until tomorrow what you can
do today. (ever, never)
5. We _____ nothing to fear but fear itself.
(have, haven't)
6. There was nothing _____ could do to help.
(anybody, nobody)
7. Nobody said life _____ be easy. (would, wouldn't)
8. Don't expect _____ for free. (anything, nothing)
9. There _____ no business like show business.
(is, isn't)
10. You haven't seen _____ yet. (anything, nothing)

C Read this advice column from a school newspaper. The writers used five double negatives in their writing. Look for the mistakes, and correct them. Use the proofreading marks in the box.

Remember 

Do not use two negative words together in one sentence.

Ask Mr. Tips

Dear Mr. Tips,

I hate tests! I don't never do well on them. I study for them, but I start to sweat once a test begins. Suddenly, the questions don't make no sense. What's wrong with me?

Barely Passing

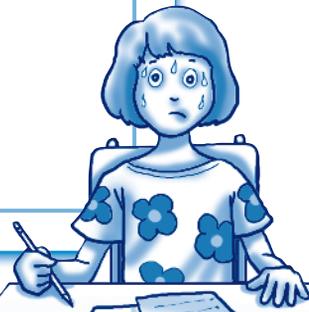
Dear Barely Passing,

There isn't nothing wrong with you. You just need to relax. Breathe deeply before a test. Tell yourself that you will do well. Don't pay attention to nobody in the room. If you can't answer a question, that's okay. Go on to the next one, and don't think nothing about it.

Mr. Tips

Proofreading Marks

-  Add
-  Period
-  Take out
-  Capital letter
-  Small letter



Did you correct five double negatives?

