

Either and Neither, what is the difference?

We use either and neither to talk about two similar things and choices to be made. They can be determinants, pronouns or adverbs.

1 - EITHER

Either is always associated with the idea of a choice between several alternatives. It is always followed by a name in the singular:

- Either day suits me = A day or another day is ok for me.
- Either solution is good. = Both solutions are good.

When it is subject (whether it is a determinant or a pronoun), the verb is in the singular:

- Which pub shall we go? - We can go to **either** pub.
- We have two choices. **Either** (of them) is fine.

Either is often followed by of and it can also be used with a plural name or pronoun in this case:

- You can have **either** of the books.
- **Either** of the hotels will be fine.

Not... either is the negative equivalent of *too*. It is often placed at the end of the sentence:

- I don't like wasting my time. - I don't like it **either**.
- She hasn't had anything to eat and I haven't **either**.

Either is often used with 'or':

- You can **either** come with me or stay here.
- He's **either** shy or bored.

If this conjunction is used with the subject, the following verb is in the singular:

- Either Sam or Tina **has** ~~have~~ taken it.

⚠ **You can use Either alone, without any names:**

- Do you want tea or coffee ? - **Either**. I don't mind.

⚠ **To say "in any case", "in either case", we use the formula "Either way,...":**

- You can stay, or you can go. **Either way**, I'm going home.

⚠ **'On either side' means "on both sides, on both sides":**

- You can park **on either side** of the road.

2 - NEITHER

Neither est négatif, il s'utilise pour exprimer un double refus. Il s'emploie toujours avec un verbe à la forme affirmative.

- Neither movie is any good.
- Neither of them came.
- Neither is fine with me.
- Neither solution is good.

When it is subject (whether it is a determinant or a pronoun), the verb is in the singular

- We have two players, but neither of them **is** ready for the game.

Neither... nor: we find this formula mainly in writing, it is not normally used orally:

- I like neither pizza nor pasta. (⚠ but we normally say '*I don't like pizza or pasta*').
- It's neither good nor bad. (⚠ but we normally say '*It's not good or bad*').
- They can neither read nor write. (⚠ but we normally say '*They can not read or write*').

If this conjunction is used with the subject, the following verb is in the singular:

- Neither John nor Tina **is** coming tonight.

⚠ **Neither can be used alone, without any names:**

- Is your friend British or Australian? - Neither, he's Canadian.

⚠ **How can I say "me neither"?**

It is necessary to take the affirmative form of the auxiliary of the starting sentence:

- She **can't** swim. Neither **can** I.

The following formulas can be used:

Neither do I. (formal) / Me neither. (very familiar) / I don't either. (very familiar)

- He doesn't like running. Neither do I. /Me neither.

We can also say "Neither do we", "we don't either", "neither do they"... to answer a negative sentence.