Avoiding Double Negatives • Practice 1

Only one negative word is needed to give a sentence a negative meaning. Putting in more than one is a sentence error called a double negative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEGATIVE WORDS</th>
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<tr>
<td>never nobody no one not nowhere</td>
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To correct a double negative, remove one of the negative words or change one to a positive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORRECTING DOUBLE NEGATIVES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Double Negative</td>
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<tr>
<td>We can’t let nobody know about it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can’t find the cat nowhere.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 1 Correcting Double Negatives. Circle the word in parentheses that makes each sentence below negative without creating a double negative.

EXAMPLE: I wouldn’t have (none, any) of the spinach.

1. Our family never does (nothing, anything) on the weekends.
2. The manager (can, can’t) seem to keep nobody working for him.
3. I wouldn’t have (no, any) part in playing that trick on Rod.
4. Those books (are, aren’t) none of mine.
5. I never go (nowhere, anywhere) without buckling my seatbelt.

Exercise 2 More Work Correcting Sentences With Double Negatives. Correct each sentence below by eliminating the double negative in two ways.

EXAMPLE: I haven’t never heard of that brand of ice cream.

I haven’t ever heard of that brand of ice cream.
I have never heard of that brand of ice cream.

1. Max shouldn’t never have tried to fix it himself.
2. We haven’t heard nothing about your trip to Canada.
3. Your keys weren’t nowhere that I could see.
4. My father says I never hear nothing that he says.
5. I didn’t want help from nobody.
Exercise 1  Correcting Sentences With Double Negatives. Rewrite each sentence below to correct the double negative.

**EXAMPLE:**  We haven’t tried none of these programs.

_We haven’t tried any of these programs._

1.  We hadn’t never realized that Theodore wrote so well.

2.  I can’t never remember that incident.

3.  Ann hasn’t said nothing about her new job.

4.  This ice cream isn’t sold nowhere else.

5.  There isn’t room nowhere for this table.

6.  They aren’t taking none of these rumors seriously.

7.  I wouldn’t never make that journey alone.

8.  The court hasn’t heard no testimony yet.

9.  The storyteller didn’t tell none of the old legends.

10.  I haven’t told nobody about your discovery.

Exercise 2  More Practice Correcting Double Negatives. Follow the directions for Exercise 1.

1.  The visitors don’t want no publicity.

2.  The end isn’t nowhere in sight.

3.  Our newspaper hasn’t printed nothing about the event.

4.  We can’t agree on no location for the meeting.

5.  The committee didn’t select nobody as chairperson.