

BOTH / BOTH OF / NEITHER / NEITHER OF / EITHER / EITHER OF

A/ We use **both/ neither/ either** for two things. You can use these words with a noun (both books, neither book etc.).

For example, you are talking about going out to eat this evening. There are two restaurants where you can go. You say:

- Both restaurants are very good, (not 'the both restaurants')
- Neither restaurant is expensive.
- We can go to either restaurant. I don't mind, (either = one or the other, it doesn't matter which one)

B/ Both of... / neither of... / either of...

When you use **both/ neither/ either + of**, you always need **the... / these/ those... / my/ your/ his/Tom's... (etc.)**. You cannot say 'both of restaurants'. You have to say 'both of the restaurants', 'both of those restaurants' etc.:

- Both of these restaurants are very good.
- Neither of the restaurants we went to was (or were) expensive.
- I haven't been to either of those restaurants. (= I haven't been to one or the other)

You don't need **of** after both. So you can say:

- Both my parents are from London, or Both of my parents...

You can use **both of / neither of / either of + us/you/them**:

- (talking to two people) Can either of you speak Spanish?
- I asked two people the way to the station but neither of them knew.

You must say '**both of**' before **us/ you/ them** (of is necessary):

- Both of us were very tired, (not 'Both us were...')

After **neither of**... a singular or a plural verb is possible:

- Neither of the children wants (or want) to go to bed.

C/ You can also use both/ neither/ either alone:

- I couldn't decide which of the two shirts to buy. I liked both, (or I liked both of them.)
- 'Is your friend British or American?' 'Neither. She's Australian.'
- 'Do you want tea or coffee?' 'Either. I don't mind.'

D/ You can say:

Both... and...: Both Ann and Tom were late.

I was both tired and hungry when I arrived home.

Neither... nor...: Neither Liz nor Robin came to the party.

She said she would contact me but she neither wrote nor phoned.

Either... or...: I'm not sure where he's from. He's either Spanish or Italian.

Either you apologise or I'll never speak to you again.

QUESTIONS:

1. 'Do you want tea or coffee?' _____, I really don't mind.'
2. 'What day is it today - the 18th or the 19th?' _____, It's the 20th.'
3. 'There are two sandwiches here; which one shall I take?' 'oh, take _____.'
4. I asked two people the way to the station but _____ them could help me.
5. 'When shall I phone you, morning or afternoon?' _____, I'll be in all day.'
6. 'Where's Kate? Is she at work or at home?' _____, she's away on holiday.'
7. To get to the town centre you can go along the footpath by the river or you can go along the road. You can go _____ way.
8. I tried to call George twice but _____ times he was out.
9. _____ Tom's parents is English. His father is Polish and his mother is Italian.
10. I was invited to two parties last week but I didn't go to _____ them.
11. Sarah and I play tennis together regularly but _____ us can play very well.
12. I tried two bookshops for the book I wanted but _____ them had it.
13. There were two windows in the room. It was very warm, so I opened _____ them.

ANSWERS:

1. either
2. neither
3. either

4. neither of
5. either
6. neither
7. either
8. both
9. neither of
10. either of
11. neither of
12. neither of
13. both of