No, none (of) and not any

Α	We can use no and none (of) instead of not a or not any for particular emphasis. Compare: Reminder → 129–134
	 There isn't a train until tomorrow. and There's no train until tomorrow. (more emphatic) Sorry, there isn't any left. and Sorry, there's none left.
	 He didn't have any of the usual symptoms. and He had none of the usual symptoms.
	We use other pairs of negative words and phrases in a similar way: There isn't anyone / anybody here. and There's no one / nobody here. (more emphatic) She wasn't anywhere to be seen. and She was nowhere to be seen. Why don't you ever call me? and Why do you never call me?
В	We don't usually use not a / any, not anyone, etc. in initial position in a sentence or clause, or straight after and, but or that at the beginning of a clause. Instead we use no , none of , no one , etc.: No force was needed to make them move. (not Not any force was needed) Most players are under 16 and none of them is over 20. (not and not any of them) I'm sure that nothing can go wrong. (not that not anything can)
<u>c</u>	In a formal or literary style we can use not a in initial position or after and , but or that (see also Unit 100):
	 Not a sound came from the room. (less formally There wasn't a sound from the room.) She kept so quiet that not a soul in the house knew she was there.
D	After no, we can often use either a singular or a plural noun with little difference in meaning, although a singular noun is usually more formal: No answers could be found. (or more formally No answer) We want to go to the island but there are no boats to take us. (or more formally there is no boat.)
	However, we use a <i>singular</i> noun in situations where we would expect one of something, and a <i>plural</i> noun where we would expect more than one. Compare: I phoned Sarah at home, but there was no answer . (not but there were no answers.) and He seems very lonely at school, and has no friends . (not no friend.)
E	We can give special emphasis to no or none of using phrases like no amount of with uncountable nouns, not one / not a single with singular countable nouns, and not one of with plural nouns: The company is so badly managed that no amount of investment will make it successful. Not one person remembered my birthday. (or Not a single person) Not one of the families affected by the noise wants to move.
F	Some phrases with no are commonly used in informal spoken English: No wonder (= it's not surprising); No idea (= I don't know); No comment (= I have nothing to say); No way, No chance (= emphatic ways of saying 'no', particularly to express refusal to do or believe something); No problem, No bother (= it isn't / wasn't difficult to do something): 'The computer's not working again.' 'No wonder. It's not plugged in!' 'Thanks for the lift.' 'No problem. I had to go past the station anyway.'

Exercises

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