

Adjectives: Common mistakes

Incorrect: Every people know this.

Correct: Everybody knows this. / Everyone knows this.

Incorrect: Each hands have five fingers.

Correct: Each hand has five fingers.

Incorrect: Either roads lead to the airport.

Correct: Either road leads to the airport.

The adjectives each, every, either and neither should be followed by a singular noun and a singular verb.

Incorrect: I have no any friends.

Correct: I have no friends. / I haven't any friends. / I haven't got any friends.

The word any has a negative meaning. It is not used with 'no'.

Incorrect: Both men have not come.

Correct: Neither man has come.

Instead of 'both ... not', we normally use neither.

Incorrect: Shakespeare is greater than any playwright.

Correct: Shakespeare is greater than any other playwright.

Shakespeare himself is a playwright. So, the first sentence actually says that Shakespeare is greater than Shakespeare. As you can see, it does not make any sense.

Incorrect: Samuel is elder than Mark.

Correct: Samuel is older than Mark.

Incorrect: Jennifer is the eldest girl in the class.

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Correct: Jennifer is the oldest girl in the class.

The adjectives elder and eldest are only used attributively (before nouns). After a verb, we use older and oldest.

Incorrect: He is more better than I.

Correct: He is better than I.

Adjectives of one or two syllables form their comparative and superlative forms by adding -er or -est. Longer adjectives take more or most. More and most cannot be used with adjectives ending in -er or -est.