
Distributives – each – every

Introduction

1) Distributive determiners or simply distributives refer to a group of people or things, and to individual members of the group. They show different ways of looking at the individuals within a group, and they express how something is distributed, shared, or divided.

Each person is unique.

Every person is unique.

2) The distributives *each* and *every* are both related to describing the members of a group. These distributives can only be used with countable nouns by being placed before the nouns. In many cases, they are interchangeable but there is a subtle difference between them.

Each is used to describe and highlight an individual member of a group, or multiple individuals. By using *each* you recognise the item is a part of a group, but that it also needs to be pointed out as a singular item too.

Each book on the shelf had a unique cover.

Each can be used with plural nouns and pronouns but must be followed by *of*.

Each of the pupils received a Christmas card.

Each can be used after the subject or at the end of a sentence.

My siblings each have their own room.

My mother gave my sister and I \$20 each. (=gave \$20 to each of us.)

Every, by contrast, is a way of referring to the group as a collection of individual members.

Every cannot be used with plural nouns.

~~*Every boys in my class wanted that computer game.*~~ *Every boy in my class wanted that computer game.*

Every can express different points in a series, especially with time expressions.

Every morning Phillip goes for a run.

And *every time* Ann would forgive him.

Short Story Dialogue

– *Have you heard of Crystal's upcoming wedding? They are throwing a huge party with 300 guests invited.*

– *That's a lot of people!*

– *Yeah, and **each of the guests** received a hand-written invitation. Could you believe that?*

– *Maybe they wanted **everyone** to feel welcomed.*

– *I could have never done something like that! That's just insane and sounds like a total waste of time.*

– *Well, **to each his own**, I suppose.*

Independent Practice - Distributives – each – every

1) Underline the correct distributive in the following sentences.

- a. My two sisters *each/every* have their own business.
- b. I live with a roommate, so we are paying \$500 *every/each*.
- c. *Every/Each* of the board directors signed the papers.
- d. Stop being so judgmental! As they say, to *every/each* his own.
- e. *Every/Each* day I read 20 pages of a book.

2) Rewrite the sentences so that they have a similar meaning and contain the distributive in brackets.

a. Whenever I tell you to calm down, you snap at me. (every)
b. Susan, Meghan, Kelly and I got free tickets to the cinema. (each)
c. The police searched all the buildings in the neighbourhood. (every)
d. Different people like different things. (each)
e. I was looking for you everywhere! And all of our friends were trying to reach you too! (each)

Independent Practice: Answers - Distributives – each – every

1) Underline the correct distributive in the following sentences.

- a. My two sisters each/every have their own business.
- b. I live with a roommate, so we are paying \$500 every/each.
- c. Every/Each of the board directors signed the papers.
- d. Stop being so judgmental! As they say, to every/each his own.
- e. Every/Each day I read 20 pages of a book. (Both variants are possible, though every is used more often.)

2) Rewrite the sentences so that they have a similar meaning and contain the distributive in brackets.

- a. Every time I tell you to calm down, you snap at me.
- b. Each of us got free tickets to the cinema.
- c. The police searched every building in the neighbourhood.
- d. To each his own.
- e. Each of our friends was trying to reach you too!