

“all”, “whole” and “entire” are quantifiers. This means they indicate aspects of quantity.

Their usage depends on the type of noun they describe, i.e. singular or plural, countable or uncountable.

ALL

“All (of the)” can generally be used with all types of noun, e.g.:

Singular countable nouns

The lessor has leased all of the building.

I waited all morning for a call from London.

Plural countable nouns

They have plans to sell all or a significant portion of the assets.

Have they paid all the invoices from 2015 yet?

Uncountable nouns

Please send us all the documentation you have on the matter.

They have not sent us all the information we asked for.

WHOLE

“Whole (of the)” can be used with singular countable nouns, e.g.:

The lessor has leased the whole building.

We’ve rented the whole of the 5th floor as we’re planning to take on more staff.

“Whole” cannot be used with plural countable nouns or uncountable nouns, e.g.:

Plural countable nouns

They have plans to sell the whole or a significant portion of the assets. □

Have they paid the whole of the invoices from 2015 yet? □

In the Contractor’s opinion the whole snags were rectified before handover of the building. □=> all the snags

Uncountable nouns

Please send us the whole documentation you have on the matter. □

They have not sent us the whole information we asked for. □

The Operator does not guarantee the off-take of the whole electric energy generated at the wind farm. □=> all the electric energy

ENTIRE

“Entire” and “whole (of the)” are synonyms and usually interchangeable.
“Entire” is more formal.

“Entire” can be used with singular countable nouns, e.g.:

The lessor has leased the entire building.

We’ve rented the entire 5th floor as we’re planning to take on more staff.

Like “whole”, “entire” cannot be used with plural countable nouns or with most uncountable nouns.

“**Entire of**” is wrong, but “the entirety of (the)” is correct, although it’s wordy and over formal, so I don’t recommend it.

If you need to use “of” or “of the”, you cannot use “entire”, e.g.:

WRONG

*The unemployment rate for **entire Poland** was 18%. ▯*

RIGHT

The unemployment rate for the whole of Poland was 18%.

The unemployment rate for all of Poland was 18%.

WRONG

*You do not have to pay them a bonus for **entire 2015**. ▯*

RIGHT

You do not have to pay them a bonus for the whole of 2015.