No or not?

No

1: We use ‘no’ to reply to a question.
   • A: Are you coming to the party? B: No.
   • A: Did she go home? B: No, she’s over there.

2: We use ‘no’ before a noun. We don’t use ‘a / an / the’. It means ‘not any’.
   • There is no bread left.
   • She has no money.

3: We use ‘no’ before a noun that has an adjective but no article.
   • There are no small sandwiches.
   • No young people went to the meeting.

4: We use ‘no’ before a gerund
   • No smoking!
   • No fishing!

We can’t use ‘not’ and ‘no’ together in standard English. It’s possible in some dialects of English but it is not traditionally correct.
   • We have no friends.
   • NOT: We don’t have no friends.
No and not any

No = not any (though ‘no’ is a little stronger)

• There is no bread.
• There isn’t any bread.

We don’t use ‘no’ with ‘any’.

NOT: There is no any bread.

Not

We use ‘not’ in almost every other situation. Sometimes we shorten it to ‘n’t’.

1: It’s used to make a verb negative.

• She does not want to go.
• We didn’t find the money.

2: It’s used with an adjective without a noun.

• That is not okay.
• A: How is your brother? B: Not well.

3: It’s used with an adverb.

• Not surprisingly, it was dark when we left.

4: It’s used with any / much / many / enough

• A: Do you like coffee? B: Not much.
• NOT: A: Do you like coffee? B: No much.

• A: How many books do you have? B: Not enough!
• NOT: How many books do you have? B: No enough!
• Not many people came to the meeting.
• NOT: No many people came to the meeting.

4: It’s used with nouns that have ‘a / an / the’.

• There is not a cat in the garden.
• OR: There is no cat in the garden.
• NOT: There is no a cat in the garden.

• A: Who went to the meeting? B: Not the students.
• OR: A: Who went to the meeting? B: No students.
• NOT: A: Who went to the meeting? B: No the students.

5: We use ‘not’ before a pronoun or noun in short replies.

• A: Who ate the chocolate? B: Not me.
• A: Who is going to pay for this? B: Not you.

No good

Exception: we can use either ‘no’ or ‘not’ with ‘good’.

• It’s no good = this is a fixed expression that means that it’s not useful or interesting.
• It’s not good = this is the normal negative.