

LEARNERS

LEARNING
WITH A
DIFFERENCE

Social English
for
Learners

How to ask Questions

Betty Kirkpatrick

How about...?

Would you like...?

Are you sure?

What's the matter?

Know what I mean?

CONTENTS

How to ask Questions

Betty Kirkpatrick



LEARNERS
PUBLISHING

© 2007 Learners Publishing Pte Ltd

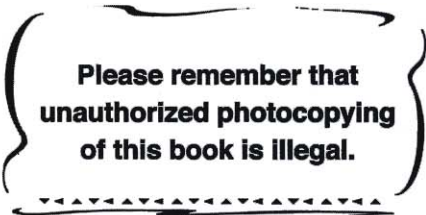
First published 2007 by **Learners Publishing Pte Ltd**
222 Tagore Lane, #03-01 TG Building, Singapore 787603

All rights reserved. No part of this book shall be reproduced, or transmitted by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the publisher.

Email: learnpub@learners.com.sg
Visit our website: <http://www.learners.com.sg>

ISBN 978 981 4151 13 9

Printed by COS Printers Pte Ltd



**Please remember that
unauthorized photocopying
of this book is illegal.**

ASSOCIATE COMPANIES

R I C Learners International Limited
P.O. Box 332, Greenwood
WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6924

R I C Publications Limited (Asia)
5th floor, Gotanda Mikado Building
2-5-8 Hiratsuka, Shinagawa-ku Tokyo
JAPAN 142-0051
Tel: 03-3788-9201
Fax: 03-3788-9202
Email: elt@ricpublications.com
Website: www.ricpublications.com

CONTENTS

PREFACE	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
Part 1 Using <i>wh</i>-words to ask questions	3
Unit 1 <i>Who, whom and whose</i>	5
Unit 2 <i>Which</i>	17
Unit 3 <i>When</i>	22
Unit 4 <i>Where</i>	28
Unit 5 <i>Why</i>	34
Unit 6 <i>What</i>	41
Unit 7 <i>How</i>	57
Practice	72
Part 2 Using auxiliary verbs to ask questions	76
Unit 1 <i>Am, is and are</i>	78
Unit 2 <i>Was and were</i>	88
Unit 3 <i>Has, have and had</i>	94
Unit 4 <i>Do, does and did</i>	103
Practice	116
Part 3 Using modal verbs to ask questions	120
Unit 1 <i>Can and could</i>	123
Unit 2 <i>May and might</i>	141
Unit 3 <i>Will and would</i>	153
Unit 4 <i>Shall and should</i>	173
Unit 5 <i>Must</i>	181
Practice	184
Part 4 Question Tags	189
Unit 1 Question tags with <i>be</i>	192
Unit 2 Question tags with <i>have</i>	200
Unit 3 Question tags with <i>do</i>	206
Unit 4 Question tags with <i>can</i> and <i>could</i>	213
Unit 5 Question tags with <i>may</i> and <i>might</i>	218
Unit 6 Question tags with <i>will</i> and <i>would</i>	223
Unit 7 Question tags with <i>shall</i> and <i>should</i>	228
Unit 8 Question tags with <i>must</i>	233
Practice	237
ANSWERS	241

PREFACE

It is important for learners of English to be familiar with the various ways that questions can be asked in English. Questions form an important element of English, particularly spoken English. Without such a knowledge of questions, and indeed without a corresponding knowledge of how to answer them, learners of English will be unable to become truly fluent in conversational English.

This book describes the various ways that questions can be asked in English. It gives copious examples of all the question methods so that learners can see the language of questions in action. These examples of questions come accompanied by appropriate answers. Language notes have been inserted throughout the book to add to the student's knowledge of questions.

The book is divided into four parts, one part for each question method. Each part is subdivided into units. Thus, for example, the part dealing with words beginning with *wh-* to ask questions is divided into individual units, each dealing with a particular *wh-*word such as *who*, *which*, *what*, *when*, and so on. The part dealing with the use of modal verbs in asking questions is divided into individual units, each dealing with a particular modal verb such as *can*, *could*, *would*, *should*, and so on.

Each unit is provided with two reading passages, especially written for the purpose. These show students how questions and answers are actually used in English and how they relate to each other in a continuous piece of prose.

Each part is followed by a series of exercises based on the information given in each part. This enables students to discover how successful their studying of question methods has been. Answers are provided for the various exercises.

INTRODUCTION

Questions are sentences which seek information of some kind. They are followed by a question mark (?). There are several ways of asking questions in English.

1 Questions using wh-words

A common type of question in English is known as a **wh-question** because such a question begins with one of a series of words beginning with wh-. These include **who, whom, whose, which, what, when, where, why** and **how**, although **how** does not begin with wh-.

Wh-questions are seeking some kind of specific information and so require an answer other than **yes** or **no**. Such questions are sometimes known as **open questions** because they allow the person replying to the question a wider choice of answer than other questions do.

- *'What happened?' 'The driver lost control of the car.'*
- *'Who won the competition?' 'Jack.'*
- *'Whose bike is that?' 'It's mine.'*
- *'Which necklace do you prefer?' 'This one.'*

The information given in reply to a wh- question is often a sentence in more formal contexts, but sometimes, especially in less formal contexts, it can be a phrase, or even just one word:

- *'Why did you sell your flat?' 'I needed more space.'*
- *'Who is that?' 'My girlfriend.'*

Sometimes a question using a wh-word is a **rhetorical question**. Rhetorical questions take the form of questions, but they are not really used to seek information. In fact, they do not expect an answer at all. In many cases they are simply expressing a strong opinion or feeling on the part of the speaker, rather than expecting a response from the person they are speaking to:

- *'Who does she think she is? She had no right to use my computer without my permission.'*
- *'What on earth do you think you're doing? This is private land.'*

2 Questions using auxiliary verbs

Another method of asking questions in English involves the use of **auxiliary verbs**. Auxiliary verbs, also known as **helping verbs**, such as **am, is, are, was, were, do, does, did, has, have, had**, are often used in **yes/no questions**, questions which seek the answer **yes** or **no**, or an equivalent of one of these:

- *'Are you sure our neighbours have moved?'*
- *'Yes. I saw the removal van outside their house yesterday.'* Or *'No, but I know that they were planning to.'* Or *'I don't know.'*

3 Questions using modal verbs

Another method of asking questions involves the use of **modal verbs**. Modal verbs such as **can, could, shall, will, should, would, may, might, must**, are often used in **yes/no questions**, questions which seek the answer **yes** or **no**, or an equivalent of one of these:

- *'Could you give me a lift to work tomorrow?'*

4 Questions using question tags

Sometimes a **question tag** is added at the end of the statement, making it more obvious that the statement is, in fact, a question. A question tag is formed by using the same auxiliary verb or form of the verb 'be' as is used in the statement and this verb is followed by a personal pronoun, which refers to the subject of the statement, such as **can you?, might we?, isn't it?, couldn't you?**, etc.

You use a question tag when you expect agreement from the person you are speaking to. You usually add a **negative tag** to a positive statement and a **positive tag** to a negative statement:

- *'You **have** your passport, **haven't** you?'*
'Yes, here it is.'
- *'The child **hasn't** been sick again, **has** she?'*
'No, she's only been sick once.'

Part 1 Using Wh-words to ask questions

Wh-questions usually begin with a word beginning with **wh-**, such as **who, whom, whose, which, what, when, where, why** and **how**, although **how** does not begin with **wh-**. You use these question words to ask for facts.

The answer to a **wh-question** is often a sentence. Sometimes, especially in less formal contexts, it can be a phrase, or even just one word. However, the answer to **wh-questions** is never just **yes** or **no**.

A **wh-question** usually begins with one of the wh-words listed above and ends with a question mark (?). The wh-word is often followed by a verb and this verb sometimes takes the form of a **modal verb** such as **can, could, may, might**, etc, or an **auxiliary verb**, such as **is, are, did, has**, etc.

When a wh-word is the subject of a question or part of the subject, the wh-word comes first and this is followed by the verb or verb group, the word order being the same as that of an ordinary statement:

- *'What happened?'*
'The driver lost control of the car.'
- *'Which flowers did you choose?'*
'Roses.'

When a wh-word is the object of a verb or preposition, or when it is an adverb, the wh-word still comes first. The subject is put after the first part of the verb group:

- *'Which do you prefer?'*
'This one.'
- *'What is she searching for?'*
'Her car keys.'
- *'Where has the man gone now?'*
'I don't know.'



- *'How does she feel now?'*
'She's still depressed.'

The information given in reply to a wh- question is often a sentence in more formal contexts, but sometimes, especially in less formal contexts, it can be a phrase, or even just one word:

- *'Why did you sell your flat?'*
'I needed more space.'
- *'Who is that?'*
'My girlfriend.'

Who

How to use it

You use **who** in questions when you want to know the name or identity of someone or of some people.

1 You use **who** to ask the name or identity of someone or of some people when **who** is the subject of the verb:

- *'Who is that man over there? He looks familiar.'*
'That's Jim Brown, our MP.'
- *'Who are these people? I don't recognize any of them.'*
'They're employees from one of the branches of the firm.'
- *'Who is the new managing director?'*
'It's Peter Allen. He's just been appointed.'
- *'Jack keeps talking about Jane. Who's Jane?'*
'She's Jack's new assistant.'
- *'Who are The Fliers?'*
'A new local pop group.'
- *'Who's Sue's father? Apparently he lives around here.'*
'That's Jack White who lives next door to my cousin Jean in King Street.'
- *'Who's in charge here? I want to complain about the poor service.'*

Language Help ?

Note the spelling of **who's**, which is the contracted form of **who is ...?** It is sometimes wrongly confused with **whose**, as in *Whose car is that?*

If you say *What's Sue's father?*, you are asking what job he does. You are not asking about his identity.

'Mr Allen, but I'm afraid he's not here just now.'

- *'Who's the man who introduced the first speaker?'*
'That's Tom White, our marketing director.'

2 You also use **who** to enquire about the name or identity of someone or some people when **who** is the object or complement of a verb, except in very formal contexts:

- *'Who did you invite?'*
'Jim. He's my new boyfriend.'
- *'Who did the police question?'*
'They questioned all of us.'
- *'Who did the teacher punish?'*
'Jim and Bill.'
- *'Who has she accused of theft?'*
'She's accused the cleaner.'
- *'Who did you ask?'*
'I asked the shop manager.'

Language Help ?

Formerly, this use was considered ungrammatical and **whom** was used in such contexts. See **whom**.

3 You also use **who** to enquire about the name or identity of someone or some people when it is the object of a preposition, except in very formal contexts:

- *'Who will the children play with?'*
'My brother's children.'
- *'Who was Bob dancing with?'*
'He danced with quite a few girls.'
- *'Who was Jack beaten by in the tennis final?'*
'Jim's younger brother Bill.'
- *'Who were you talking to?'*
'My mother. I haven't phoned her for ages.'
- *'Who were the winners chosen by?'*
'The principal.'

Language Help ?

Formerly, this use was considered ungrammatical and **whom** was used in such contexts. See **whom**.

4 You can also use **who?** on its own, especially in response to something someone has said:

- 'I think I know who the thief is.'
'Who?'
'I'd better not say until I tell the police.'
- 'I've discovered who Jane's new boyfriend is.'
'Who?'
'Jim White.'

who are you to ...? /who am I to ...? /who is he, etc to ...?

You use these expressions to ask what right or authority someone has to do something. The expressions are often used in **rhetorical questions** and often sound quite rude or unfriendly:

- '**Who are you to** criticize Sue for not coping with the children? You don't know what it's like to be a single mother or to have not enough money to live on.'
- '**Who is he to** complain about what the government is doing with our taxes? He's unemployed and has never paid tax in his life.'

Language Help ?

A rhetorical question is one to which the speaker or writer does not expect an answer.

Teacher only

who asked you?

You say **who asked you?** to someone who has made a comment or remark when you think that they should not have done so because what is being discussed does not concern or involve them. It is often rather a rude expression and is usually a **rhetorical question**:

- 'I think you are being rather hard on the girl.'
'Who asked you? I'm in charge of staff discipline and I'll decide what's to be done and what's not to be done.'
- 'I think you should let Sue go on a gap year if she wants to. It'll be good for her.'
'Who asked you? You're not the one who's going to have to pay for her foreign travel. I am!'

who can say?

You use **who can say?** when you want to emphasize the lack of certainty or information relating to something. It is usually a **rhetorical question**:

- 'What will happen next? Will there be a war?'
'**Who can say?** Only time will tell.'
- 'Will Jane and Jim get married?'
'**Who can say?** Jim's had several serious girlfriends before.'



Language Help

You can use **who's to say?** instead of **who can say?**:

- 'Will Jack get another job?'
'**Who's to say?** He's very talented, but there aren't many jobs in his field around here.'

who cares?

You use **who cares?** when you want to show that you do not think that something is at all important. It is often rather a rude expression and is usually a **rhetorical question**:

- 'The teacher said that she is going to give us a surprise test some time this week.'
'**Who cares?** All that matters is the exam at the end of the term.'
- 'We're going to be late for school if we don't hurry up.'
'**Who cares?** It's geography this morning and I hate geography.'

who do you think you are? / who does he, etc think he, etc is?

You use these expressions when you are angry or surprised at something someone has done or said and want to point out that it was not their responsibility or right to do so. The expressions are rather rude and are usually **rhetorical questions**:

- 'Your secretary said she wasn't feeling well and Tom told her to go home.'
'*Who does he think he is?* I have important letters that should be sent today and my secretary is always saying that she doesn't feel well!'
- 'There is going to be a bus strike tomorrow and so I told the staff that they could work at home tomorrow.'
'*Who do you think you are?* As human resource manager, I would never have agreed to that. Most workers can find some other way to get here.'

who knows?

You use **who knows?** in order to emphasize the fact that there is a lot of uncertainty or a lack of information about something. The expression usually takes the form of a **rhetorical question**:

- 'Will this scheme be effective?'
'*Who knows?* We'll just have to hope that it works.'
- 'I hear the firm's in financial trouble. What will happen now?'
'*Who knows?* We'll just have to wait and see.'

who on earth ...?

You can say **who on earth ...?**, in less formal contexts, for emphasis, especially when you are surprised or angry about something:

- '*Who on earth* made this mess in the kitchen?'
'The kids have been making a birthday cake for you.'
- '*Who on earth* is that woman wearing that dreadful hat?'
'That's the bride's mother!'

Language Help

You can also use other phrases, such as **who in the world ...?** or **who in Heaven's name ...?**, in the same way as **who on earth ...?**:

- '*Who in Heaven's name* was foolish enough to buy that ruined building?'
'Actually, I bought it!'

who says?

You use **who says?** when you want to emphasize how much you want to disagree with something that has been said. It is used in informal contexts, and is rather rude and often takes the form of a **rhetorical question**:

- 'The Christmas party will have to be cancelled.'
'**Who says?** That's for me as organizer to decide.'
- 'You'll have to move out of the flat now that you and Sue have broken up.'
'**Who says?** The flat's in my name. I'm not going anywhere!'

who's that?

1 You can say **who's that?** when you want someone to identify themselves because you cannot see them:

- '**Who's that?** Is there someone downstairs?'
'It's me, Mum. I just came back for my bike. See you later!'
- 'I'm sure I heard someone in the garden.'
Who's that?
'It's no one. It's just the cat from next door.'
- '**Who's that?** I won't open the door at this time of night unless you tell me who you are.'
'It's the police, Mrs Smith.'



Language Help ?

You can also say **who's there?** in this situation:

- 'I'm sure I heard a noise upstairs. **Who's there?**'

You can also use **who's that?** when you are asking someone the identity of someone else:

- '**Who's that** over there?
He looks familiar.'
'That's Jill's husband.'

- 2 You sometimes use **who's that?** when you want to know the identity of a telephone caller, although it is more usual and more polite to say **who's speaking, please**. You usually use **who's that?** in this context when you are annoyed, especially when no one says anything at the other end of the line:

- *'Who's that? I'm in a hurry.'*

Language Help

In American English people sometimes use **who's this?** in the above context.

whoever

You can make a question sound more emphatic by using **whoever** instead of **who**, especially when you are surprised, shocked or angry about something. It sometimes introduces a **rhetorical question**.

- *'Whoever would be cruel enough to treat a dog like that?'*
- *'Whoever would be foolish enough to invest in such a risky scheme?'*
'People like my husband, unfortunately.'
- *'Whoever can that be knocking at the door at this time of night?'*

Whom

How to use it

You use **whom** in questions when you want to know the name or identity of someone or of some people.

- 1 You can use **whom** to enquire about the name or identity of someone or some people when **whom** is the object or complement of a verb, but only in formal contexts:

- *'Whom shall we contact in an emergency in your absence, sir?'*
'Please contact my deputy, Mr Brown.'

- *'Whom is the electorate likely to hold responsible if this project should fail?'*
'The government, sir.'
'Exactly. That is why I, as prime minister, have decided not to proceed with it.'
- *'Whom did the board of directors appoint as spokesperson?'*
'The director in charge of human resources.'

Language Help

In less formal contexts of this kind *who* is used. See *who*.

2 You can also use **whom** to enquire about the name or identity of someone or some people when **whom** is the object of a preposition, but only in formal contexts:

- *'Please address the letter "To whom it may concern" and post it right away.'*
'Certainly, sir.'
- *'By whom were these changes to the law authorized?'*
'They were authorized by the president himself.'
- *'With whom does the accused normally associate?'*
'He is a member of a gang called the Red Demons, sir.'

Language Help

In less formal contexts of this kind *who* is used. See *who*.

Note that, when **whom** is the object of a preposition, the preposition must be put in front of **whom**, not at the end of the sentence or clause.

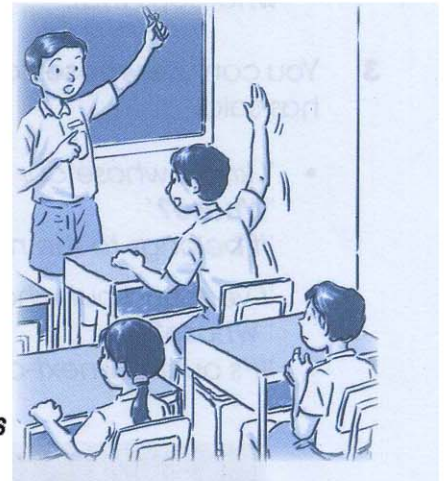
Whose

How to use it

You use **whose** as a pronoun or a determiner in questions to ask who something belongs to or to ask who something is associated with or connected with.

1 You use **whose** to ask which person or people something belongs to:

- 'I found this pen. **Whose** is it?'
'It's mine. I lost it yesterday.'
- 'I found this bag of books under the desk.
Whose could it be?'
'It must belong to one of the students.'
- 'I found these tools in the garage. **Whose** are they?'
'They're Tom's. I borrowed them from him to repair the windows.'
- '**Whose** notebooks are these?'
'They belong to the journalist who was here this morning.'
- '**Whose** dog was run over in the street?'
'It was my neighbour's dog. She's very upset.'
- '**Whose** car was stolen from the car park?'
'The marketing manager's.'



Language Help

In the first three example sentences above, **whose** is used as a pronoun. In the last three sentences, **whose** is used as a determiner and so is followed by a noun.

Note the spelling of **whose**. It is sometimes wrongly confused with **who's**, which is a contracted form of **who is ...?**

2 You use **whose** to ask which person or people something is associated with or connected with:

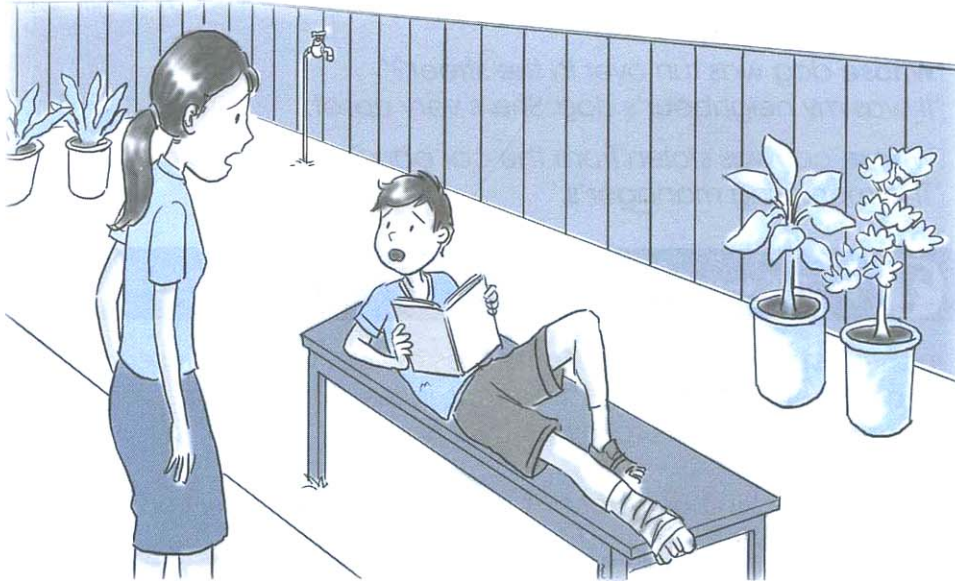
- *'Whose fault was it?'*
'We don't know yet. In fact, the fire could have been accidental.'
- *'Whose responsibility is it to lock up the office after the cleaners have gone?'*
'The caretaker should do that.'
- *'Whose job is it to send out information to shareholders?'*
'It's the managing director's secretary who does that.'

Language Help ?

In the example sentences given here, **whose** is used as a **determiner** and so is followed by a noun.

3 You can use **whose?** on its own, especially in response to something someone has said:

- *'I know whose car that is.'*
'Whose?'
'It belongs to the new designer.'
- *'I've found out whose dog it was that attacked you.'*
'Whose?'
'It's our new next-door neighbour's.'



Mobile dispute

Bill **Whose** mobile rang just now?

Jim It was mine. Why?

Bill You're supposed to switch it off in here.

Jim **Who** says?

Bill It's a school rule.

Jim I was told that that just applied to the classrooms. This is the common room.

Bill **Whoever** told you that?

Jim I don't remember. In any case, **who** cares? There are no teachers here.

Bill A lot of the other students will be annoyed if you use it in here. Some of them come here to do some extra studying.

Jim Well, I come here to relax and read magazines. **Whose** books are these on this chair?

Bill They're mine. I'll just move them.

Jim Thanks. By the way, **whose** job is it to tidy up in here?

Bill The school cleaner cleans it, but we're all responsible for keeping it tidy. **Who** left those dirty coffee mugs there?

Jim **Who** knows? The place was empty when I came in.

A missing letter

- principal** **Who's** that man in the waiting room, Mrs Smith? I assume he's a parent.
- secretary** That's Mr Brown, Mr Jackson.
- principal** **Whose** father is he? We have several students called Brown.
- secretary** He's Jack Brown's father. Jack's in Year 3. Mr Brown's here to complain about not receiving a letter he wrote about bullying.
- principal** **To whom** did he send the letter? I certainly have never seen such a letter.
- secretary** He said that he addressed it to you, Mr Jackson, but I haven't seen it either. **Who** opened your mail when I was on holiday last week? I know the temp only worked in the afternoons.
- principal** I opened the letter myself and there was none from Mr Brown. **Who** is said to be bullying **whom**?
- secretary** Mr Brown says that Jack is being bullied by Tom White and Bill Jones.
- principal** Well, I won't tolerate bullying in this school. Please ask Mr Brown to come into my office, Mrs Smith.
- secretary** Certainly, Mr Jackson.

Unit 2

WHICH

How to use it

You use **which** when you want someone to identify a particular person or thing, or a number of people or things, from a limited number of things or people.

1 You can use **which** as a **pronoun** when you want to identify a particular person or thing from a fairly restricted number of different people or things:

- *'Which is the university that has the best business course?'*
'There are several universities with very good business courses, but I think Harvard's probably the best.'
- *'Here's a list of the best restaurants in the area. Which do you fancy?'*
'The French one sounds good. Let's go there.'
- *'Which is the quickest route to the city?'*
'The expressway is the quickest way, if you avoid the rush hour.'
- *'You've tasted a selection of our best cheeses. Which did you like best?'*
'That's a very difficult choice, but I think I prefer this one.'
- *'I like all three of these tables. Which is the cheapest?'*
'It's that one there.'
- *'These children are all very talented. Which are the most artistic, do you think?'*
'I would say Tom and Anne.'
- *'These are all the cakes I have left. Which of them would you like?'*
'I'll have the strawberry one, please.'

2 You can use **which** as a **determiner** when you want to identify a particular person or thing, or a particular group of people or things, from a fairly restricted number of different people or things:

- *'Which carpet do you like best? There's such a huge selection that I can't decide.'*
'I like this plain dark blue one.'
- *'Which wedding dress did you choose?'*
'I eventually decided on the first one we saw.'
- *'Which parents reacted most positively to the criticism?'*
'In fact, it was the older parents who did so.'
- *'Which foodstuffs are the healthiest?'*
'Fruit and vegetables, for the most part.'
- *'We have a large selection of cheeses. Which one would you like?'*
'I'd like some of that blue cheese.'
- *'Which French cities do we pass through?'*
'I'm not sure, but I know we go through Paris.'
- *'Which Baltic country do they come from?'*
'I think they come from Poland.'



Language Help

Note that, when **which** is a determiner and part of the object of a preposition, the preposition is usually put at the end of the sentence or clause, as in the last two example sentences above. Formerly, it was considered ungrammatical to end a sentence with a preposition, as you do here, but it is now accepted that doing so sounds more natural.

Note that when the choice available is unrestricted, **what** is often used:

- *'What injuries did the victim sustain?'*
'He has a broken arm and a broken leg.'
- *'What motive could he have had for murder?'*
'The victim was his aunt and he was her sole heir.'

3 You can use **which?** on its own, especially in response to something someone has said:

- 'I'd like that cake over there.'
'**Which?**'
'The chocolate one with cream on top.'
- 'I love that house over there!'
'**Which?**'

which is which?

You use **which is which?** when you are asking how to distinguish between things or people that are very similar:

- 'Bob's twin daughters look very much alike. **Which is which?**'
'They look very much alike, but Amy is slightly taller and slightly darker than Mary.'



- 'I gather that one of these vases is the original and the other is a very clever copy. **Which is which?**'
'The one on the right is the original.'

Language Help ?

It often sounds more natural to use **which one?** in this context:

- 'I like that rug over there.'
'**Which one?**'
'The dark blue one.'

At the baker's

- Mrs Black I'd like some small cakes, please.
- Baker Certainly, Mrs Black. **Which** would you like?
- Mrs Black **Which** of these little chocolate cakes would you recommend? I want something especially nice for my mother. She's just come out of hospital.
- Baker They're all delicious, Mrs Black, but I know your mother loves these chocolate ones.
- Mrs Black I'll take four of them, then, and two of those over there.
- Baker **Which?** These here? Oh, you mean these little chocolate brownies. Would you like anything else, Mrs Black?
- Mrs Black Yes, please. I'd like three chocolate muffins and some sandwiches for lunch. **Which** sandwiches don't have mayonnaise in them? I can't stand mayonnaise!
- Baker Those on the top shelf. There's quite a variety.
- Mrs Black I'll have these. How much do I owe you?
- Baker That will be fifteen dollars fifty, please, Mrs Black. Give my kind regards to your mother.

Getting the right train

- Jane** They said at the ticket office that our train leaves from platform 3.
- Sue** This is platform 3, but there are two trains here. One's the London train and the other one goes to Birmingham. **Which is which**, do you think?
- Jane** This is the London train. It says so on the front of the train. **Which carriage** will we go on?
- Sue** Let's go on the one next to the buffet car. **Which one's** that?
- Jane** It's usually Coach E, I think. Yes, here it is. Let's see if there are any empty seats in it. We really should have made reservations.
- Sue** The train's not usually very busy at this time of day. There are two seats together over there. **Which** do you want? The aisle seat or the window seat?
- Jane** I'll take the aisle seat, please, if you don't mind. **Which direction** is the buffet car?
- Sue** It's that way, but it won't be open yet.

Unit 3

WHEN

How to use it

You use **when** in questions when you want to know the time something happened, happens or will happen.

1 You use **when** to find out the time, such as the year, day of the week, time of day, etc, that something happened in the past, whether the past is long ago or relatively recent:

- *'When was the Battle of Waterloo?'*
'1815.'
- *'When in 1945 did Adolf Hitler commit suicide?'*
'In April.'
- *'When did you last see your husband, Mrs Smith?'*
'I saw him at breakfast last Thursday.'
- *'When did your headaches first occur?'*
'They started about two months ago and I get them fairly regularly.'
- *'When did the concert finish?'*
'Around eleven. It overran a little.'



Language Help

You can sometimes use an expression such as **what time ...?**, **what day ...?**, **what year...?**, etc instead of **when**:

- *'What time did you get there?'*
'Just after midnight.'
- *'What year were you born?'*
'I was born in 1974.'

2 You also use **when** to find out the time, such as the year, day of the week, time of day, etc, that something is going to happen in the future:

- **'When's Mary's baby expected?'**
'Sometime next month, I think.'
- **'When's the next bus due?'**
'There should be one coming in about ten minutes.'
- **'When can I see you again? Are you free tomorrow evening?'**
'I'm busy tomorrow, but I could see you at the weekend.'
'Fine. I'll look forward to that.'
- **'When do they serve breakfast here?'**
'It's served from 7.30 until 9.00.'
- **'When will we have our next meeting?'**
'Most people are in favour of having it on next Friday. Is that all right?'
'Yes, I'll see you then.'
- **'When will you get the results of the blood test?'**
'The doctor said that they'll take about a week.'
- **'When would it be convenient for me to collect the rest of my belongings?'**
'Any time after seven in the evening. I don't usually get back from work much before that.'
- **'When should we set off for the airport?'**
'We should leave right away if we want to avoid the worst of the traffic.'



Language Help

Note that, although some **when** questions refer to something that is going to happen in the future, they are not all expressed in the future tense. Some use the present tense:

- **'When do you get your exam results?'**
'Next Friday. I'm dreading them.'
- **'When does the train get into London?'**
'It's due to arrive just after six.'

3 Sometimes you use the word **when** alone in a question, often in response to something someone has said:

- *'I'm about to leave on a business trip.'*
'When?'
'I hope to leave early this afternoon.'
- *'The landlord's selling the flat and we have to move out.'*
'When?'
'At the end of next month.'
- *'Sue's having a baby soon.'*
'When?'
'It's due at the end of the week.'



when on earth ...?

You can say **when on earth ...?**, in less formal contexts, for emphasis, especially when you are surprised or angry about something:

- **'When on earth** are you thinking of going to work? It's nearly midday.'
- 'I'm not going in until the afternoon. I arranged with the boss to have the morning off.'*
- **'When on earth** are we going to get there?'
- 'We'll be lucky to get there at all at the rate this train's going. It must be a very old engine.'*
- **'When on earth** are you going to tell the boss you're leaving? You've known about your new job for days.'
- 'I'm waiting until I get an official letter, just in case anything goes wrong.'*

since when?

1 You use **since when?** to express surprise or anger on hearing that something has happened:

- *'Jim's club president now.'*
'Since when?' *He wasn't even a member when I was last here.'*
'You haven't been here for about two years. Jim's been president for six months now.'

- 'Jack and Sue are married.'
'**Since when?**'
'They got married secretly last Saturday, apparently. They didn't want a big wedding.'
- 'The local bookshop has closed down.'
'**Since when?**'
'About a week ago. The owner went bankrupt.'
'That's a great pity.'

2 You use **since when ...?** in certain informal contexts when you want to show that you are surprised or angry about something:

- 'That'll be \$20, please.'
'What? **Since when** does a couple of sandwiches and a coffee come to \$20?'
- 'Try and persuade Jim to go back to university. You're his father.'
'**Since when** did he ever take any advice from me?'
- 'I personally would give her the job.'
'**Since when** was it your business to appoint members of staff?'

Language Help ?

When **since when?** is used in the second meaning it usually forms a rhetorical question.

whenever

You can make a question sound more emphatic by using **whenever** instead of **when**, especially when you are surprised or angry:

- **Whenever** do you expect me to get my own work done if I have to keep stopping to help you?
- '**Whenever** did you get in last night? You weren't home by one o'clock when I fell asleep.'
'I didn't get back till after three. The party didn't finish till very late and then I couldn't get a taxi.'
- '**Whenever** do you think the plumber will arrive?'
'I've no idea. He was meant to be here early this morning and it's now late afternoon.'

Language Help ?

Questions with **whenever** sometimes take the form of rhetorical questions.

An absent fiancé

- Mary** I hear you've just got engaged. Congratulations. **When's** the wedding?
- Liz** We're hoping to get married a few months after my graduation.
- Mary** **When** do you graduate?
- Liz** Hopefully, in July of next year, but, of course, I've still to sit my finals. They're next May.
- Mary** **When** did you meet your fiancé? Is he from round here?
- Liz** No, John's from York. We met at university. He graduated last year and he's training to be a lawyer down here.
- Mary** I'd love to meet him. I'm visiting my parents for the next couple of weeks. Let's get together. **When** would suit you?
- Liz** I'd love to meet up with you, but John's not here just now, unfortunately. He's in New York for a month.
- Mary** **When** did he leave?
- Liz** He only left yesterday and so you'll have gone before he gets back. Still, we can meet.
- Mary** **When?**
- Liz** I'll give you a ring tomorrow and we'll arrange something.

A football injury

Doctor **When** did you first feel the pain in your knee, Tom?

Tom I hurt it at football practice but it wasn't too bad at first. It's gradually got worse since then. It's agony when I go for my morning run.

Doctor **When** was the football practice?

Tom Three days ago. **When** will you know if my leg's broken?

Doctor I'm almost certain it's not broken, but I'm going to arrange for an X-ray, just as a precaution.

Tom **When**?

Doctor Right away. I'll ring the hospital now. **When** can you get there?

Tom My Mum's in the waiting room. She'll drive me down now.

Doctor Good. I'm fairly certain that you've pulled a muscle. You need to rest your leg for a bit and I'll arrange for some physiotherapy for you.

Tom **When** will I get that?

Doctor Hopefully, you'll get your first appointment very soon, but rest will help.

Unit 4

WHERE

How to use it

You use **where** in questions when you want information about the place, position, location or direction of something.

1 You use **where** to ask about the place or position of something:

- *'Where should I put this box of fruit?'*
'Put it on the kitchen table, please.'
- *'Where did you find the missing ring?'*
'It was under the sofa.'
- *'Where will I find a small saucepan?'*
'In the cupboard under the sink.'
- *'Where are my car keys? I left them on the hall table, but they're not there.'*
'I thought I saw you put them in your pocket.'
'You're right. Here they are!'
- *'Where is today's newspaper?'*
'I put it in the recycle bag. I thought you'd finished with it.'

2 You also use **where** to ask about the location, situation or direction of something. In particular you use **where** when you want to find out the place where someone lives:

- *'Where does Jane live?'*
'She lives in a flat in King Street. I don't know the exact address.'
- *'Where will you live when you go to university?'*
'I'm hoping to get a place in one of the halls of residence.'
- *'Where exactly is the new hotel?'*
'It's on London Road where the old bus station was.'

- 'We've reached the edge of the town. **Where** do we go now?'
'We turn left here and then turn right at the roundabout.'
- '**Where** did the boy go to?'
'He ran away in that direction.'
- '**Where** does Jim come from? He sounds American.'
'Actually, he's from Canada. He lives in Toronto.'
- '**Where** did you find that out?'
'There was an article about it in today's newspaper.'
- '**Where** do you want to fly to?'
'I want to go to London and I'd like a direct flight if possible.'



Language Help

In **where** questions with a **preposition** the preposition goes at the end of the sentence or clause, not in front of **where**:

- '**Where** did that dog come **from**?'
'It jumped over the fence **from** next door.'

Formerly, it was considered ungrammatical to end a sentence with a preposition, as you do here, but it is now accepted that doing so sounds more natural.

Note that, when you want to know where someone is going, you usually say **Where are you going?**/**Where is he going?**, etc. You do not usually say **Where are you going to?**, etc, although the preposition 'to' is used in replies:

- '**Where are they going?**'
'They're going **to** the city.'
- '**Where did she go?**'
'She went **to** the cinema.'

- 3 Sometimes you use the word **where** alone in a question, often in response to something someone has said:

- 'Look, there's a red squirrel.'
'Where?'
'It ran up that tree.'
- 'There's Sue's boyfriend over there.'
'Where? I've never met him.'
'He's the man talking to Bill.'
- 'There's Sue's house.'
'Where?'
'It's that red house on the right.'



where on earth ...?

You can say **where on earth ...?**, in less formal contexts, for emphasis, especially when you are surprised or angry about something:

- '**Where on earth** is my new watch? I thought it was in my bedroom, but it's not there.'
'It's in the bathroom. You probably took it off when you were washing your hands.'
'Thanks.'
- '**Where on earth** have you been? I was expecting you three hours ago.'
'Sorry. My car broke down miles from anywhere and I didn't have my mobile with me.'
- '**Where on earth** did Aunt Liz buy that hat? It's so ugly!'
'I think she found it at a local jumble sale.'

whereabouts

You use **whereabouts** to ask in what general area something or someone is:

- '**Whereabouts** is the hotel that Jack recommended?'
'He said it was just outside the city. That's about fifteen miles away.'
- '**Whereabouts** do you think I could find information about the crime? It happened such a long time ago.'
'You could try the reference department in the local library. Or you could try the local newspaper.'

- *'Whereabouts is the nearest supermarket?'*
'There's one just outside the town on the east side.'

Language Help

The word **whereabouts** can also be a noun meaning the place or area where someone is:

- *The police are trying to find out the **whereabouts** of the murdered woman's husband.*
- *The teenager did not come home last night and his parents are growing anxious about his **whereabouts**.*

wherever

You can make a question sound more emphatic by using **wherever** instead of **where**, especially when you are surprised or angry:

- *'Wherever did you find that marvellous little table?'*
'I found it in a little antique shop when I was on holiday. I'm very pleased with it.'
- *'Wherever did you put the book I was reading when you were tidying up? I can't find it anywhere!'*
'Oh dear! I thought you'd finished reading it. I took it back to the library this morning with my books.'

The missing map

- Jim This is Monkshill. **Where** do we go from here?
- Liz We go straight on here, but I'm not sure where we go after that. **Where** is the piece of paper with Jane's directions?
- Jim I don't know. **Where** did you put it?
- Liz I didn't put it anywhere. You were supposed to put it inside the road directory.
- Jim I did put the directions in it. **Where** is it?
- Liz It's right here, but the paper with the directions isn't in it. **Where** else should I look?
- Jim You could look in my briefcase. I had the road directory in there. The paper might have slipped out.
- Liz **Where on earth's** your briefcase? I didn't see it when I was packing the car.
- Jim I put it behind your seat.
- Liz We could stop for some lunch at Blandford. I'll look for it then.
- Jim **Whereabouts** is Blandford?
- Liz It's a little town a couple of miles down the road.

A travel dilemma

- John I fancy a weekend away.
- Sue That's a great idea! **Where** would you like to go?
- John I quite like the idea of Italy. **Where** does Francesca come **from**?
She says it's beautiful around there.
- Sue **Where** did she fly to last time when she went home to see her parents?
- John She flew to Rome, but I know that it was quite a long drive from there to her home.
- Sue Then we wouldn't really have time to go there on a weekend break.
- John That's true. We'd better go to a city and we've been to Rome twice. **Whereabouts** would you like to go?
- Sue I quite fancy somewhere in Eastern Europe. **Wherever** is that place that your cousin went to last year?
- John It was somewhere in the Czech Republic, but, again, it was in the country.
- Sue I know. Let's go to Riga.
- John **Where**?
- Sue Riga. It's a city in Latvia.

Unit 5

WHY

How to use it

You use **why** in questions when you want information about the reason or purpose for something. You can also use it to introduce a question that indicates that you do not think some form of action was or is necessary.

1 You use **why** to ask the reason or purpose for something:

- *'Why have you decided to drive there? The traffic will be dreadful.'*
'I don't want to drive, but the earliest train wouldn't get me there in time for the meeting.'
- *'Why does Mrs Jones look so angry?'*
'Apparently, most of the class have done very badly in the surprise test she gave us.'
- *'Why are you going to knock down that wall?'*
'The two rooms are quite small and we want to make them into one larger one.'
- *'Why did the boss want to speak to you?'*
'She wanted to know if I could work late all this week.'
- *'Why are those men digging up the road?'*
'Apparently, they're going to put in a new set of traffic lights here.'
- *'You'll have to work on Saturday morning to finish this order.'*
'Why me? Can't Jane or Sue do it? I worked last Saturday!'
'They're both on holiday.'

2 You can also use **why**, often followed by the infinitive without 'to', to show that you think that something is unnecessary:

- *'I'm thinking of redecorating the front room.'*
'Why bother? We're planning to move soon.'

- *'I'm going to call at the travel agent's for some brochures on my way home.'*
'Why waste time doing that? All the best deals are on the Internet nowadays.'
- *'I'm going to cook desserts for the party this afternoon. They'll take me quite a long time.'*
'Why cook? You can get such delicious ready-made desserts from the supermarket these days.'
'I like cooking and my desserts are far better than shop-bought ones!'
- *'We'd better hurry. We're going to be late for work.'*
'Why worry? The boss is on holiday this week.'

3 Sometimes you use the word **why?** alone, or **why not?**, in a question, often in response to something someone has said:

- *'I've decided not to go to university.'*
'Why?'
'I've been offered a place at drama college and I've always wanted to work in the theatre.'
- *'I'm going to sell my flat.'*
'Why?'
'The neighbours above me play very loud music most of the night. I can't stand it any longer.'
- *'I'm not going to play in the football team this season.'*
'Why not?'
'I want to concentrate on studying for my final exams.'

why don't ...?

See **Language Help** at **why not ...?**

why ever ...?

You can make a question sound more emphatic by using **why ever ...?** instead of **why?**, especially when you are surprised or angry:

- *'Why ever did you refuse the invitation to the party?'*
'It's a formal affair and I've nothing suitable to wear.'

- *'Why ever do you want to leave home? You don't pay rent and your mother cooks all your meals and does your washing.'*
'I don't want to go on living with my parents. I want to be independent.'
- *'Why ever was Jane so rude to Tom?'*
'He was going out with Jane's sister and he treated her very badly.'

why not ...?

1 You can use **why not ...?** in order to make a suggestion:

- *'The traffic will be very heavy at that time of day. Why not take the train?'*
'I would, but there isn't a direct train there.'
- *'You've been unhappy there for ages? Why not look for another job?'*
'I'm thinking of doing just that.'
- *'Jim has a spare bike. Why not ask him if you can borrow it for the afternoon. I'm sure he won't mind.'*
'That's a good idea. I'll just go and ask him.'



Language Help

You can use **why don't ...?** with the same meaning:

- *'Why don't you come over for dinner tonight and we'll talk about it then. Come about seven.'*
'Thanks. I'll be there.'
- *'It's a lovely day. Why don't we take the kids on a picnic?'*
'That's a great idea. I'll go and get the food together.'

2 You can also use **why not?** to agree with a suggestion:

- *'I thought it would be nice to take Mum out for lunch on her birthday.'*
Why not? We could try that new French place in Market Street?'
- *'Do you fancy going to the football match today?'*
'Why not? It should be quite a good game.'

- *'I'm going to look at wedding dresses today. Will you come with me and help me choose one?'*
'Why not? I might look for a dress myself at the same time.'

why oh why ...?

This expression is a more emphatic way of asking why, often when you are surprised, annoyed, etc:

- *'Why oh why did she not go and see a doctor earlier? She could have saved herself a lot of pain.'*
'She's terrified of doctors.'
- *'Why oh why did you lend Jack money? Everyone knows he's completely untrustworthy.'*
'I didn't. I'm new around here, remember.'
- *'Why oh why did it have to rain today of all days, Mum? It's my wedding day.'*
'Try not to worry, Liz. The wedding's not till this afternoon and it's meant to clear up by then.'



why on earth ...?

You can say **why on earth ...?**, in less formal contexts, for emphasis, especially when you are surprised or angry about something:

- *'Why on earth don't you learn to drive?'*
'I started to learn once and had a bad accident. It put me off driving for life.'

- *'Why on earth does she stay with him when he treats her so badly? I think she only stays with him for the kids' sake.'*
- *'Why on earth are you moving to the country? You'll miss your friends and all the restaurants and theatres.'*
'We've decided that the country is a better place to bring up children.'

why should I?

You use **why should I, you, he, etc?** or **why shouldn't I, you, he, etc?** to emphasize that there is no reason why something should be done or not be done:

- *'Are you going to help him?'*
'Why should I? He's never done anything to help me.'
- *'Jim's not going to leave without giving us any time to replace him, is he?'*
'Why shouldn't he? He's got absolutely no security working here and he's been offered a good job where he's to start immediately.'
- *'You are going to go and see your stepmother in hospital, aren't you?'*
'Why should I? She's always been absolutely horrible to me.'
- *'You're not planning to borrow your brother's car without permission, are you?'*
'Why shouldn't I? I lent him some money to buy it and I've helped him with all the repairs. Besides, he's not here to ask.'

Language Help ?

Such questions are often rhetorical.

A quarrel between friends

- Mother **Why don't you** ring Anne and invite her over for tea?
- Sally **Why should I?** She said some horrible things to me yesterday.
- Mother You probably said some horrible things to her as well. You were both very angry. **Why not** try to be friends with her again? You'll be sorry if you don't.
- Sally **Why?** I have plenty of other friends.
- Mother But Anne is your best friend and has been since you went to nursery school together. I think I'll ring her mother and ask them both over.
- Sally **Why** waste your time? They won't come, and even if they do, I won't be here.
- Mother **Why not?** You didn't say you were going out.
- Sally I'm going round to Jane's house.
- Mother **Why on earth** are you going to do that? You don't even like Jane!
- Sally She's all right. I don't want Anne thinking I've got no other friends. I'll see you later.

Some brotherly advice

Jack Why's Mum so angry?

Jim She's annoyed with me for coming home so late. She says I shouldn't go out so much so near to the exams.

Jack Then why oh why don't you listen to her?

Jim Why are you agreeing with her? You went out a lot when you were my age.

Jack I know I did, but I regret it.

Jim Why ever is that? You've got a great job.

Jack I do, but I was pretty miserable when I first left school.

Jim Why? I can't wait to leave school.

Jack I could only find very boring jobs because I did badly in my exams and had very few qualifications. Then I got a reasonably paid job in a lawyer's office and went to evening classes after work for ages.

Jim Why bother, if you were earning enough money?

Jack I wanted job satisfaction and I wanted to become a lawyer.

How to use it

You use **what** when you want to know the facts about something or to find out various kinds of specific information about something or someone.

1 You use **what** to ask for information about something:

- *'What are you going to do now?'*
'I'm going to look for a new job.' Or *'Look for a new job.'*
- *'What did you give your wife for her birthday?'*
'I gave her a silver necklace.' Or *'A silver necklace.'*
- *'What time is it?'*
'Midnight.'
- *'What made you sell your car?'*
'I couldn't afford to run it any more.'
- *'What happened?'*
'His car broke down.'
- *'What will happen to the young man now?'*
'He will almost certainly go to prison.'
- *'What's the weather like there today?'*
'It's cold and wet.'
- *'What's the weather forecast for today?'*
'It's going to be cold, but dry.'



2 You use **what** in order to find out the identity or nature of something. You use **what** before a singular or plural noun when you are not referring to a limited range of choices:

- *'What damage has the fire caused?'*
'The whole building has been destroyed.'

- **'What entertainment was provided?'**
'There was a jazz band.'
- **'What food do the children like?'**
'Their favourite is fish fingers and chips.' Or 'Fish fingers and chips.'
- **'What jobs are available in the area?'**
'Only factory jobs.'
- **'What kind of car does he drive?'**
'He drives a Honda.' Or 'A Honda.'
- **'What university is he going to?'**
'Oxford.'

Language Help

In the above examples the word **what** is a determiner, and so is followed by a noun. In most other uses of **what** in **wh-questions**, **what** is a pronoun and is never followed by a noun.

When there is a limited or restricted range of choices available you use **which**:

- **'Which bike would you like for your little girl? There are four left.'**
'I'll have the pink one, please.'

See **which**.

3 You can also use **what?** on its own, especially in response to something someone has said:

- **'I know what Dad would like for Christmas.'**
'**What?**'
- **'I think I know what went wrong.'**
'**What?**'

4 You use **what** to ask about the nature of someone's job:

- **'What do you do?'**
'I'm a computer technician.'



- *'What was Jack's father before he retired?'*
'He was an accountant.'
- *'What are you going to do when you leave university?'*
'I'm hoping to be a journalist.'
- *'What do you want to be when you grow up?'*
'A teacher.'



Language Help

You use **what was ...?** before a person, as in the second example above, when you want to know what their job or profession was. You use **who was ...?** when you want to know the identity of the person:

- *'Who was Jim's grandfather?'*
'Mr Jones who lived next door to my grandparents.'

- 5 You can also use **what** to ask someone to repeat something, although not in formal contexts and although it is not considered very polite to do so:
 - *'Could you turn down the television? I'm on the phone.'*
'What?'
- 6 You can also use **what** when someone has called you and you want to know what they want, although not in formal contexts and although it is not considered very polite to do so:
 - *'Kimi!'*
'What?'
'Could you come downstairs? I need help to move this table.'
- 7 You can also use **what** to indicate that you are very surprised, angry or shocked at something:
 - *'Jim has left his wife.'*
'What? I saw them just last week and they looked very happy together!'
 - *'We're all going to have to work overtime all this week.'*
'What? The Jazz Festival is on and I've booked several tickets for it.'



Language Help

You can also put a relevant pronoun before **what** in the above use:

- *'Jack has crashed your car!'*
'He what?'
- *'I'm afraid I spilt wine on the white dress you lent me.'*
'You what?' *I'll never get the stain out.'*

what about ...?

1 When you want to draw someone's attention to something, or want to remind them about someone or something, especially in informal contexts, you can use **what about ...?**:

- **'What about** restaurants? *Are there any decent ones in the area? There's an excellent French one and some quite good Indian and Chinese ones.'*
- **'What about** Bob? *Will he get a place in the team? No, because he has an injured ankle.'*



Language Help

You can also use **how about ...?** instead of **what about ...?** in this context:

- *'I'll have to stay at home this morning. There's no one to look after the children.'*
'How about you mum?
'Mum's away on holiday this week.'

2 When you want to make a suggestion to someone you can also use **what about ...?**, especially in informal contexts:

- **'What about** going to the cinema this evening?'
'Sorry, I can't. I'm working late.'

- *'What about taking the train instead of driving?'*
'Good idea! That'll be much less tiring.'
- *'What about another drink?'*
'No, thanks. It's time I went home.'



Language Help

You can also use **how about ...?** instead of **what about ...?** in informal contexts to make a suggestion:

- **How about** *spending Christmas with us?*

what are you doing with ...?

You use **what are you doing with ...?** when you want to express surprise or annoyance that someone is in possession of something, or at the use that they are putting it to:

- *What are you doing with that computer? It belongs to Jim and he hates other people using it.*
- *What are you doing with those cups? They're Mum's best china and she only uses them on special occasions.*

what can I do for you?

You can use **what can I do for you?** to ask, in an informal context, in what way you can help someone:

- *'Good morning, Mrs Brown? What can I do for you today?'*
'I'd like a small chicken and a kilo of pork sausages, please.'
- *'Hi Jane. I'm calling to ask if you can do me a favour.'*
'Hi Sue. I'll help if I can. What can I do for you?'
- *'May I speak to the owner of the house, please?'*
'I'm the owner of the house and I'm in a hurry. What can I do for you?'

Language Help



In more formal contexts **how can I help you?** is used:

- *'Good morning, sir. How can I help you?'*
'I'd like three large white handkerchiefs, please.'

what do you mean ...?

1 You use **what do you mean ...?** when you want to indicate, often in surprise, shock or anger, that you do not understand exactly what someone is suggesting:

- *'What do you mean Jim's gone? I saw him at his desk this morning.'*
'He's left the company. He handed in his notice at lunch time and left immediately.'
- *'What do you mean you thought it would be OK to borrow my car?'*
'You said I could borrow it occasionally.'
'But not without asking me first.'

2 You can also use **what do you mean ...?** when you are expressing annoyance or anger at something someone has said or done:

- *'What do you mean by interrupting the meeting?'*
'I had a message for you.'
'The message wasn't important!'

what do you think you are doing?

You use **what do you think you are doing?** when you wish to express annoyance at someone's action or behaviour:

- *'What do you think you are doing? You shouldn't be in the office at this time of night.'*
'I left my bag and came back to get it. The caretaker let me in.'
- *'What do you think you're doing? You have no right to use the school's football pitch without permission.'*
'We're just about to start a charity match on behalf of children with cancer. We didn't know we needed permission.'

what for?/what ... for?

When you want to ask the reason for something or the purpose of something, you can use **what for?/what ... for?** instead of **why...?**, usually in less formal contexts. When you do this, you put **what** at the beginning of the sentence and **for** at the end:

- 'I need to go back to the office?'
'What for?'
'I forgot my briefcase.'
- 'I'm just going to the pharmacist's.'
'What for?'
'To get some painkillers. I've got a headache.'
- 'What are you looking so miserable for?'
'My girlfriend's dumped me.'
- 'What is this gadget for?'
'It's for taking the cores out of apples.'

Language Help ?

Formerly, it was considered ungrammatical to end a sentence with a preposition, as you do here, but it is now accepted that doing so sounds more natural.

what have you done with ...?

You use **what have you done with ...?** when you want to ask someone where they have put something you are looking for, often when you are annoyed that it has been moved:

- 'What have you done with my book? I left it on the kitchen table.'
'I was tidying up. I put it back in the bookshelf in the study.'

what if ...?

When you want to ask what should be done if a certain situation occurs you can use **what if ...?**:

- 'What if it rains on the day of the children's picnic?'
'We'll have the picnic indoors in the hall.'
- 'What if he refuses to repay the loan?'
'I'll have to take him to court to get my money back.'

what of it?

You use **what of it?** in informal contexts, and not very politely, when you want to show that you do not care about something that someone has said and are questioning its importance. Often it suggests that you resent the remark they have made:

- 'You said you'd be here half an hour ago.'
'*What of it?* These meetings are a waste of time, anyway.'
- 'I hear you've dumped Sue and are going out with Jane.'
'*What of it?* Sue knew I wasn't serious about her.'

what on earth ...?

You can say **what on earth ...?**, in less formal contexts, for emphasis, especially when you are surprised or angry about something:

- '*What on earth* happened here?'
'We've been burgled.'
- '*What on earth* made you give up your job?'
'It was very boring.'



? Language Help

You can also use other phrases, such as **what in the world ...?** or **what in Heaven's name ...?** in the same way as **what on earth ...?**:

- '*What in Heaven's name* made you buy that?'
'I thought it was a bargain at the time.'

what's going on here?

You use this expression when you want to know what is happening:

- '*What's going on here?* Why is there a police car outside the house?'
'Our neighbour's house's been burgled.'
- '*What's going on here?* Where did all this water come from?'
'Sue let the bath overflow.'

what's got into you/him/her, etc?

You use this expression in an informal context when you want to know why someone is behaving in the way they are, usually rather strangely or unusually:

- *'What's got into Anne? She's been snapping at everyone all morning.'*
'She's upset because she didn't get the pay rise she asked for.'
- *'What's got into you? I've never seen you look so miserable.'*
'I've failed my driving test and I was so sure that I was going to pass!'



Language Help

The American English equivalent of **what's got into you?** is **what's gotten into you?**. It has the same meaning, and is used in the same contexts, as the British English phrase.

what's it to you?

You use this expression in an informal context, and rather rudely, when you are suggesting that someone is interfering in something which you think has nothing to do with them:

- *'I hear you called in sick again today.'*
'What's it to you? You're not my boss!'
- *'You've had too much to drink to drive home.'*
'What's it to you? I'm not offering to give you a lift.'

what's he (she, it, etc) like?

You use **what's he (she, it, etc) like?** when you want to get a description of someone's appearance, nature, behaviour, etc:

- *'You've met Jane's new boyfriend. What's he like?'*
'He's very handsome and well-dressed and he seemed very sociable.'
- *'I hear you were introduced to the new manager. What's he like?'*
'She seemed a bit stern, but I didn't speak to her for very long.'

? Language Help

If you want to know about the condition or state of someone or something, you use **how is he, she, etc?**:

- 'I hear Jim was in an accident. **How is he?**'
'He's in a lot of pain, but he's going to be all right.'

In an informal context **what's (he, she, it, etc) like?** can be used to indicate that you think someone has done something silly, stupid, unreasonable, etc:

- 'Mum has started making wedding plans already and I'm not getting married until the year after next. **What's she like?**'
'My mother was exactly the same when I told her I was getting married.'

what's the matter?

You use this expression when you want to ask why someone seems upset, worried, ill, etc, or why something seems wrong:

- 'Mrs Park's crying. **What's the matter?**'
'She's just been sacked.'



- '**What's the matter** with your car?'
'There's something wrong with the steering.'

Language Help ?

You can also use **what's wrong?** instead of **what's the matter?**:

- 'You're all looking very miserable today. **What's wrong?**'
'The boss says he's going to announce some redundancies.'
- 'Jane's gone to see the doctor?'
'**What's wrong** with her?'
'She has a very sore back.'

what's the point?

You use **what's the point?** when you are feeling rather worried and depressed and think that there is no purpose in taking a course of action since you think that it will not bring about a solution:

- 'You could try advertising the house again.'
'**What's the point?** I've advertised it three times already and I've not had a single reply to any of the ads.'



what's the weather like?

You ask **what's the weather like?** when you want to know whether it is sunny, rainy, warm or cold, etc:

- 'What's the weather like there?'
'It's been raining heavily the whole day.'
- 'What's the weather like with you? What clothes will I need to pack?'
'It's hot and dry. Just bring some shorts and tee-shirts.'

? Language Help

You can also use **what kind of weather is it?** or **how's the weather?** in the same way:

- 'Have you been walking the dog? **What kind of weather is it?**'
'It's a lovely sunny day.'
- **How's the weather** in that part of the world at this time of year?

what's up?

An expression used in informal contexts to ask what is wrong:

- *'What's up? I saw the police car outside the door.'*
'We've been burgled.'
- *'What's up with Sally? She's crying.'*
'Her dog has just died.'

Language Help

In American English this expression can be used just to ask what's happening, whether or not it looks as if there is anything wrong:

- *'What's up? You all look very busy.'*
'We're having a surprise party for Mum, and we're trying to get everything ready in time.'

what's with someone?

This expression is used in American English in informal contexts to ask why someone is behaving in the way they are, usually rather strangely or unusually:

- *'What's with Bill? He hasn't said a word all evening.'*
'He's got a very sore throat.'

what's with something?

This expression can be used in American English in an informal context to ask the reason for something:

- *'What's with all this studying?'*
'We have an English assignment to do.'

guess what?

You use **guess what?** to indicate that you are going to tell someone something surprising or exciting:

- *'Guess what? I've won a prize in the office raffle!'*
'What did you win?'

'A huge box of chocolate!'

- *'Guess what? Jim and I have just got engaged!'*
'That's very good news. Congratulations!'

now what?

You use **now what?** when you do not know what is going to happen next or what to do next:

- *'That plan has failed. Now what?'*
'We'll just have to think again.'
- *'Our bid for that house was turned down. Now what?'*
'I suggest we look for something in a cheaper area.'



Language Help

You also use **now what?** when you are tired or bored of someone constantly disturbing you or asking you questions:

- *Now what? I've explained how to work the DVD player and I'm trying to get some sleep.*

or what?

You use **or what?** when you want to emphasize the truth of something you say. This use is often found in **rhetorical questions**:

- *Is she stupid or what?*
- *Do they want to bankrupt us or what?*

so what?

You can use **so what?** in informal contexts, and not very politely, when you want to show that you do not care about something that someone has said and are questioning its importance. Often it suggests that you resent the remark they have made. It is used in informal contexts and is not at all polite.

- *'That was a lot of money to spend on a pair of shoes!'*
'So what? Shopping cheers me up.'
- *'That music is very loud. It's late and it'll disturb the neighbours.'*
'So what? The noise of their children wakes me up far too early in the morning.'

Language Help

The phrase **so what?** is used with much the same meaning and in the same contexts as **what of it?**.

The phrase is sometimes shortened to just **so?** with the same meaning:

- *'Your parents wouldn't want you to have a party when they're away.'*
'So? They're not going to find out.'

whatever

You can make a question sound more emphatic by using **whatever** instead of **what**, especially when you are surprised or angry about something:

- *'Whatever is that noise?'*
'It sounds like an electric drill.'
- *'Whatever will she do next?'*
'I don't know. She's completely out of control.'

Was it a woman?

Policeman **What** can you tell me about the accident?

Witness 1 I saw a lorry going far too fast along the street.

Policeman **What** happened then?

Witness 1 A car was coming along the street in the opposite direction and the lorry driver swerved to avoid it and crashed into that ruined building. The driver leapt from the cab before he hit the building and ran away.

Policeman **What** was he like? I need a description of him.

Witness 1 I didn't really get a very good look at him. It all happened so fast. Perhaps this gentleman here got a better look at him.

Policeman **What** information can you give us about him, sir?

Witness 2 The driver was about medium height, white, very dark-haired and wearing dark-blue overalls, but I'm not sure it was a him.

Policeman **What do you mean?**

Witness 2 I think it was a young woman.

Policeman **What?**

A difficult assignment

Anne **What on earth** are you going to write about for the English essay project?

Jane I've no idea.

Anne I don't understand any of the topics. **Whatever** am I going to do?

Sue **What's got into** Anne? She just ran past me looking dreadful.

Jane She's worried about the English essay. **What** subject have you chosen?

Sue Shakespeare's use of the supernatural, but it'll take me a long time. There's lots of research to do and the library's closed for a few days for repairs. **What** if we don't hand the essay in on time?

Jane Mrs Smith will not be very pleased.

Sue **So what?**

Jane When Mrs Smith is not very pleased with people she gives out long punishment assignments and puts them in detention.

Sue **What about** asking her for an extension? I could explain about the library.

Jane **What's the point?** She's already said the essay has to be in on time. She means what she says.

Unit 7 *HOW*

How to use it

You use **how** in questions when you want to know about the way something is done or achieved or about the way that something has come about. You also use **how** in questions when you want to know about the way someone feels, looks, etc, or when you want to know about the way something sounds, feels, etc:

1 You use **how** to try to find out about the way something is done, achieved or has come about:

- *'How can I get these grass stains out of these white trousers?'*
'Try some of this stain remover. It usually works.'
- *'How are you going to work and look after the baby?'*
'My parents said they would help.'
- *'How do you make pancakes?'*
'There's a good recipe in that book over there. I'll get it for you.'
- *'How do we get there?'*
'We can either take the bus or go by train.'
- *'How did you know that I was coming?'*
'Peter told me.'
- *'How can I explain it to her?'*
'Just tell her the truth.'
- *'Jack's found a way to get the rest of the money for the business.'*
'How?'
'He's arranged to borrow the money from his grandmother and we're going to pay her interest on the loan.'

2 You also use **how?** to ask questions about someone's health or welfare or about the way someone feels, looks, etc:

- 'I hear your mother's in hospital. **How** is she?'
'She's a lot better, thanks. The medication seems to be working.'
- 'I haven't seen Jane since we were all at university. **How** does she look now?'
'She looks older, of course, but she's still very beautiful.'
- '**How** did you feel when you saw your ex-husband again yesterday after all these years?'
'I thought I would be upset, but I didn't feel anything at all. It was as though he was a complete stranger.'



Language Help

Note that you do not use **how is ...?** etc to ask for a description of the general appearance, nature, behaviour, etc, of someone. In such a situation you would use **what is like?:**

- '**What's** Jim's sister **like**?'
'She's very beautiful and very clever.'
- '**What's** your new teacher **like**?'
'She's very strict, but very fair.'

3 You also use **how** to ask about the impression something has made on someone:

- '**How** was your trip?'
'It was great! I had a wonderful time and I'm not happy to be back at work!'
- '**How's** your new job?'
'It's OK, but it'll be better when I get to know some of my colleagues.'
- 'This steak's delicious. **How's** your chicken?'
'It's very good, thanks.'
- '**How** was your visit to London?'
'I had a good time, thanks, but it's a long journey and I'm very tired.'

? Language Help

In informal situations you can say **How was London?** with the same meaning as **How was your visit to London?**

Note that these two expressions are asking for your impressions of, or experiences of, London. They are not asking for a general description of London.

If you want to ask for a general description of something or somewhere, you use **what's ... like?** Of course, your description of someone is often influenced by your own personal attitude or taste:

- *'We're thinking of taking a city break in Europe. **What's Madrid like?***

'It's a wonderful city with marvellous art galleries and excellent restaurants and fashionable shops. I can recommend it wholeheartedly.'

- 4 You can combine **how** with other words, such as **much, many, long, far**, etc, at the beginning of questions to make enquiries about the price, quantity, number, length of time, extent or distance of something:

- *'**How much** are these grapes?'*
'They're \$6 a kilo.'
- *'**How much** money do you have with you? This restaurant looks very expensive.'*
'I don't have much cash on me, but I can pay by credit card.'
- *'I'm going to get some milk for the children's breakfast. **How much** will we need?'*
'You'd better get two litres.'
- *'It's going to be a big party.'*
*'**How many** people are coming?'*
'At least fifty.'
- *'We're expecting quite a large audience for tonight's speaker. **How many** will the hall hold?'*
'About 200 people.'

- *'How long have you worked here?'*
'Just over five years.'
- *'We're going to take the train to London. How long will it take?'*
'Just over four hours.'
- *'How far is it from here to the city?'*
'Roughly thirty kilometres.'
- *'I'll never finish this essay this evening and I have to hand it in tomorrow.'*
'How far have you got with it?'
'I'm only about half-way through.'

5 You can also combine **how** with an adjective at the beginning of questions when you want to know to what extent something has a particular quality or feature:

- *'How big is your front room? Are you sure there's enough space for that large sofa?'*
'It's a huge room. It could hold two of those sofas easily.'
- *'How old is Jim's father?'*
'He's very nearly retirement age.'
- *'How good a player is young Jack?'*
'He's very talented indeed. In fact, I'm sure he's good enough to be a professional footballer eventually.'
- *'How reliable is Jim? You've only known him a few weeks and you're going into business with him.'*
'My elder brother has known him for years and years and he says he's utterly trustworthy.'

how about ...?

1 When you want to draw someone's attention to something, or want to remind them about someone or something, especially in informal contexts, you can use **how about ...?**:

- *'The flat sounds marvellous but how about the distance you'll have to travel to work from there? Have you thought of that?'*
'There's actually a very good bus service.'
- *'How about schools in the area? My daughter starts school later this year.'*
'I believe the local school is excellent.'

- 'Neither Jane nor Sue can babysit this evening.'
'How about Anne?'
'She's going out for dinner.'

Language Help

You can also use **what about ...?** instead of **how about ...?** in the above context:

- 'The hotel sounds very nice, but **what about** the cost?'
'They're offering special deals that weekend.'

2 When you want to make a suggestion to someone you can use **how about ...?**, especially in informal contexts:

- '**How about** going away for the weekend? I feel in need of a break.'
'I'd love to but I have to work on Saturday, unfortunately.'
- '**How about** asking your brother to give us a lift into town?'
'I would, but he's away on business just now.'
- 'I'd like to see that new play at the King's Theatre. **How about** coming with me?'
'Sure, I'll come. It's had very good reviews.'
- 'I've promised to tidy up Grandad's garden this morning. **How about** giving me a hand? There's a lot to do.'
'Oh, all right, but I hate gardening!'

Language Help

You can also use **what about ...?** instead of **how about ...?** in informal contexts to make a suggestion:

- '**What about** taking the children to the park while I finish tidying up the house?'
'OK. I'll just put their coats on.'

how about if ...?

You use **how about if ...?** in informal contexts to ask what would happen if something else happens:

- '**How about if** I tell the police I was driving instead of my son?'
'They won't believe you. A witness identified your son.'

- *'How about if I lend you the money for the trip?'*
'Thanks, but it's too late. I told the others I couldn't go and they've found someone else.'
- *'The price the hotel's quoted for the wedding is far too high. We'll have to look for somewhere else.'*
'How about if we cut back drastically on the number of guests?'

how about that?

You use **how about that?** to indicate that you think something is surprising, impressive, etc:

- *'We had much the weaker team but we won. How about that?'*
'It's great, isn't it?'
- *Young Jim beat the champion. How about that?*
- *It was still winter there and yet we had a week of glorious sunshine. How about that?*

Language Help ?

How about that? is often a rhetorical question.

how are you?

You use **how are you?** as a conventional greeting when you meet someone in order to enquire about their health and well-being:

- *'Good morning, Mrs Jones. How are you?'*
'I'm very well, thanks, Mrs Smith. And you?'
'I'm fine, thanks, Mrs Jones.'
- *'Hello, John. How are you? I haven't seen you for ages.'*
'I'm fine, Tom. And you?'
'I'm OK, but I'm having a few problems at work just now.'
'I'm sorry to hear that.'
- *'Hi, Jane. How are you?'*
'I'm all right, thanks, Sue. How are you?'
'I'm OK now, although I've had a bad bout of flu.'
'Oh dear! I hope you're completely better.'

Language Help ?

People often reply to **how you are?** by saying something about their state of health, etc, and by asking about the state of yours. See **how do you do?**

In informal contexts you can say **how are things?**, **how are you doing?**, and **how's it going?** to mean the same as **how are you?**

how are things?

You use **how are things?** as an informal conventional greeting when you meet someone in order to enquire about their health and well-being:

- 'Hi Jim! **How are things?**'
'Fine, thanks. **How are things with you?**'
'Business is a bit slow, but it'll get better next month when the tourist season starts.'
- 'Hi Mary! It's good to see you. **How are things?**'
'OK, thanks, Sue. And you?'
'I'm fine, thanks. I'm enjoying my new job.'
- 'Bob! I haven't seen you for ages. **How are things?**'
'All right, thanks. What about you?'
'I'm OK, thanks, but I'm a bit tired. I'm really looking forward to my holiday.'

how are you doing?

You use **how are you doing?** as an informal conventional greeting when you meet someone in order to enquire about their health and well-being:

- 'Hi Bill! I haven't seen you for a while. **How are you doing?**'
'I'm OK. And you?'
'I'm far too busy at work but, apart from that, I'm fine.'
- 'Hello Sue! I wasn't expecting to see you here. **How are you doing?**'
'I'm fine, thanks. Actually I've been promoted. That's why I'm at this meeting.'
'Congratulations!'
- 'Anne! I haven't seen you for ages. **How are you doing?**'
'I'm very well, thanks. I'm just back from holiday.'

Language Help ?

You use **how are things?** in the same way as **how are you doing?** and **how's it going?**. The formal equivalent of the greeting is **how are you?**.

? Language Help

You use **how are you doing?** in the same way as **how are things?** (see above) and **how's it going?** (see below). The formal equivalent of the greeting is **how are you?** (see above).

how come?

You use **how come?** in informal contexts when you want to know why something happened or is the case, especially when you are surprised:

- *'Jack's not coming back to school after the holidays.'*
'How come?'
'His parents have separated and he and his mother are going to live with his grandmother in London.'
- *'The local swimming pool is closed and won't be open for another month.'*
'How come?'
'Apparently, there's a serious problem with the drainage system and it'll take at least a month to fix.'
- *'Jill's not going to university after all.'*
'How come?' *She was really looking forward to it.'*
- *'She's always wanted to be a journalist and she's been offered a job as a trainee reporter on the local newspaper. She says it's too good a chance to miss.'*

how could you ...?

You use **how could you?** to indicate that you are shocked at, or extremely disapproving of, someone's action or behaviour:

- **'How could you** *be late again, Tom? You knew I was cooking a special meal for our wedding anniversary!'*
'I'm very sorry, Sue. The train broke down and we were delayed for ages. I couldn't phone because we were in a tunnel and there was no signal.'
- **'How could Jack** *leave his wife at such a time? She's just recovering from a serious illness.'*
'Jack says that they haven't been getting along for a long time and he was going to leave just as she got ill. He says he feels he can go now she's getting better.'
- **'How could you** *be so careless? I told you that that was my best dinner set and now you've broken one of the plates!'*
'I'm really sorry, Mrs Smith. The dog jumped up on me suddenly and gave me a fright so that I dropped the plate.'

how do you do?

You use **how do you do?** as a conventional greeting in formal contexts when you meet someone for the first time:

- *'Mr Smith, this is Jane Blair, our new receptionist.'*
'Mary, this is Mr Smith, our finance director.'
'How do you do, Jane? I hope you will enjoy working here.'
'How do you do, Mr Smith? I'm sure I will.'
- *'Mum, I'd like to introduce you to Mr Black. He's the head of the department I work in.'*
'Mr Black, this is my mother, Mrs Jackson.'
'How do you do, Mr Black?'
'How do you do, Mrs Jackson? You must be proud of your daughter. She's doing very well.'
'That's kind of you to say so, Mr Black.'
- *'Good morning, Bill. Let me introduce you to Mr John Brown. He's the manager of our Luton branch and he's come to look at our new ordering system.'*
'Mr Brown, this is Mr Bill Jones, our production director.'
'How do you do, Mr Brown? I hope you find your visit to us interesting.'
'How do you do, Mr Jones? I'm sure I'll find it very useful, thank you.'

Language Help ?

It is a formal convention not to reply to **how do you do?** with any comment about the state of your health, well-being, etc.

how do you like that?

You use **how do you like that?** when you want to indicate that something is surprising, impressive, shocking, rude, etc:

- *'How do you like that? These are my exam results and I've passed them all! I was sure I'd failed maths at least!'*
'Well done!'
- *'How do you like that? I've done most of the work on this project and Jim's been given all the credit.'*
'That's so unfair! Jim should have told the boss how much you've done.'
- *How do you like that? Sue has just passed me in the street without speaking to me.*

'She says that you advised her to leave Tom and she now regrets it.'
'That's absolute nonsense! She decided to leave him of her own accord.
I just agreed with her.'

how do you mean?

You say **how do you mean?** in informal contexts when you want someone to explain something they have said:

- *'We won't be seeing Bill around here again — that's for sure.'*
'How do you mean?'
'He got drunk last night and told the boss exactly what he thought of him. The boss sacked him immediately.'
- *'What's your current marital status?'*
'How do you mean?'
'Are you married?'
'I was married, but I'm divorced now.'
- *'Bill's plans for the old barn are dead in the water.'*
'How do you mean?'
'He's applied for planning permission from the council, but it's been refused.'

how ever ...?

You can make a question sound more emphatic by using **how ever ...?** instead of **how**, especially when you are surprised or angry:

- *'How ever did Jim get the money to buy Sue's business?'*
'He borrowed it from his mother. Apparently, she's quite a wealthy woman.'
- *'We've both lost our jobs. How ever will we pay the bills?'*
'Don't worry! We've got some savings and I'm sure we'll soon find other jobs.'
'I wish I had your confidence!'
- *'How ever did the jury find him innocent? I'm sure he was the one who killed our daughter.'*
- *'I'm sorry. Apparently, the jury didn't think there was enough evidence to convict him.'*

how ... is that?

You say **how ... is that?** in informal contexts when you want to emphasize to what a great degree something or someone has a particular quality:

- *'Bob has lent Frank money? **How stupid is that?** Frank will never pay it back.'*
'Probably Bob doesn't know that.'
- *'Sue's got a job as a fashion model and she's only 16. **How cool is that?**'*
'It's great although I hear that her parents are worried about the time she'll have to take off school.'
'That's typical of parents!'
- *'Sally's going to the local university and she's going to go on living with her parents. **How sad is that?**'*
'I think she's doing it because her parents don't have much money. Her father's an invalid.'



Language Help

You can also use **how ...is that?** when you want to question or cast doubt on whether something has a particular quality:

- *'Jim says that he wants to put together a group of workers to buy the firm, but **how feasible is that?**'*
'I would think that it's pretty impossible for them to find that kind of money.'
- *'Jill claims that the organizers of the concert will make a small profit for charity if we have an audience of 350. **How likely is that?**'*
'I don't think we'll get nearly that many people to come.'

how on earth ...?

You can say **how on earth ...?** instead of **how** in less formal contexts, for emphasis, especially when you are surprised or angry about something:

- ***How on earth** do you expect to get another job without a reference? You shouldn't have just walked out and you certainly shouldn't have shouted at the boss.*

'I hated the job and he's a horrible man. I'm sure I'll find another job eventually.'

- **'How on earth** will you be able to carry on with your job when the baby's here? Good childcare is so expensive.'
- 'I'm lucky. My Mum's going to look after the baby when I'm at work. She's still quite young and she's looking forward to caring for the baby.'*
- **'How on earth** do you expect to get a place in the football team if you don't turn up for training?'
- 'I promise I'll come to training every week from now on.'*

how's it going?

You use **how's it going?** as an informal conventional greeting when you meet someone in order to enquire about their health and well-being:

- **'Hi Bill. 'How's it going?'**
- 'Not very well, I'm afraid, Tom. I'm job-hunting without much luck.'*
- 'Sorry to hear that, but I'm sure something will turn up soon.'*
- **'Hello, Mary. How's it going?'**
- 'Fine, thanks. **How are things** with you?'*
- 'Not too good, actually. I'm really not enjoying my university course.'*
- 'That's a shame. Still, you can always change to another course, can't you?'*
- **'Jane, it's a long time since I've seen you. How's it going?'**
- 'All right. I wasn't very well in the winter, but I'm fine now. What about you?'*
- 'I'm very well, thanks.'*

Language Help ?

You use **how's it going?** in the same way as **how are things?** and **how are you doing?**. The formal equivalent of the greeting is **how are you?**

how so?

You say **how so?** when you want to ask someone to explain something which they have said:

- *'There's no way I can go on holiday now.'*
- '**How so?** I thought it was all arranged.'*
- 'I've cancelled it because I can't afford it. I've just had to pay a huge bill for repairs to my car.'*

- *'The boss is giving all of us the afternoon off tomorrow.'*
'How so?'
'He wants to celebrate some major business award he's won.'
- *'I've decided not to go to Jane's wedding.'*
'How so?'
'It's going to be a very formal affair and I can't afford to buy anything suitable to wear.'

how's that?

You say **how's that?** in informal contexts when you want to know the reason for something or want an explanation of something someone has said:

- *'I can't go on working here anymore.'*
'How's that?'
'The boss keeps asking me to go out with him, although he knows I already have a boyfriend.'
- *'It's chaos around here just now.'*
'How's that?'
'Mum invited the whole family for the weekend to celebrate Dad's birthday. There are 12 of us in all and Mum and Dad's house only has three small bedrooms.'
- *'Property prices around here have fallen drastically recently.'*
'How's that?'
'The government announced plans to build a new stretch of expressway right through this area.'



Language Help

You can also use **how's that ...?** when you want to know someone's opinion of something:

- *I made a bed up for you in the spare room. **How's that?***

Changing jobs

- Harry John, I'm glad you could come to the party. **How are you?**
- John I'm very well, thanks, Harry. **How's it going?**
- Harry Fine, thanks, John.
- John I hear you've just got back from the States. **How** was your trip?
- Harry I made a few useful contacts, but I'm not sure we'll ever do much business in the States.
- John **How so?**
- Harry It's a very competitive market and we can't compete with their prices, although we compare very well on quality.
- John **How annoying is that!**
- Harry It's just something we have to accept. It won't matter to me for much longer, anyway.
- John **How come?**
- Harry My father's going to retire soon and I'm going to take over his bookselling business.
- John **How** is your father? I haven't seen him for a long time.
- Harry He's absolutely fine, but he wants to do things other than work.
- John I don't blame him!

READING 2

A domestic accident

Tom Hi Jane! I'm sorry to see your arm's in plaster. **How** did you break it?

Jane I was doing some redecorating and I fell off the ladder. **How stupid is that!** It's my right arm too!

Tom A lot of accidents happen like that. **How long** will it be in plaster?

Jane Another three weeks and this couldn't have happened at a worse time?

Tom **How's that?**

Jane Bill left for New York yesterday and I'm finding very difficult to manage around the house. I can't brush my hair properly, let alone look after the baby.

Tom **How could he** leave you in this state on your own?

Jane He didn't have a choice. He had to go to an urgent international meeting. Enough about me! **How are you doing?**

Tom I'm fine, thanks. I hope you'll be OK.

Jane I'm sure I will, thanks.

PRACTICE

1 A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

which who's where whose how

- _____ foolish is that?
- _____ mobile is this?
- _____ did they come from?
- _____ of those did you select?
- _____ going to go first?

B Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

- Jim _____?
Liz The train leaves at seven tomorrow morning.
- Sue _____?
Mary It's my bag.
- Jack _____?
John The film finished about ten o'clock.
- Bill _____?
Harry I haven't seen him since early last week.
- Tom _____?
Sally I found it in a little dress shop in Paris.

2 A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

why how whatever whom what

- _____ do you carry those pills around for?
- _____ was your weekend break?
- _____ is that terrible smell in the fridge?
- _____ did she leave at such short notice?

5. _____ were her critical remarks addressed?

B Supply questions to the answers to complete the following dialogue:

- Mrs Smith Mrs Brown, how nice to see you. _____ ?
- Mrs Brown I'm fine, thank you, Mrs Smith. _____ ?
- Mrs Smith I'm fine, too, thanks. _____ ?
- Mrs Brown My sister's much better, thank you. She's out of hospital now and recovering well. _____ ?
- Mrs Smith Unfortunately, my husband's not very well at the moment.
- Mrs Brown Oh dear! I'm sorry to hear that. _____ ?
- Mrs Smith That's just it. The doctors are not too sure what's wrong with him. It's very worrying.
- Mrs Brown I hope he gets better soon. Please give him my best regards..

3

A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

whereabouts what whom whenever when

- _____ did you graduate?
- _____ is this plane going to take off? It's nearly an hour late already.
- To _____ was his warning directed?
- _____ is that theme park Sue was talking about?
- _____ made you change your mind?

B Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

- Sue _____ ?
Anne The man standing next to Bob? That's Jack's brother Jim.
- Mary _____ ?
Jane I think the blue dress suits you better.
- Bob _____ ?
Bill Jack's fine now, but he's been very ill.

4. Jim _____?
 Jack Bob plays for a team called the Strikers. They're the best local football team.
5. Reporter _____?
 Policeman As far as we can tell, there was no motive. It was a random attack.

4 A Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

1. Anne _____?
 Jim The TV weather forecast said that it was going to be wet and windy.
2. Sue _____?
 Bill He has a Ford Fiesta, but he's thinking of getting a bigger car.
3. Mum _____?
 Jack If you don't mind, Mum, I'd rather have some money to put towards my trip abroad, rather than a Christmas present.
4. Aunt _____?
 Jill I'm hoping to go to drama college when I leave school.
5. Mary _____?
 Anne My mother has a very good recipe for chocolate brownies. I'll get her to give it to you.

B Supply questions to the answers to complete the following dialogue:

- Mary We've got school tomorrow. We'd better not stay long at the party.
 Bob _____?
- Mary I care and so should you. We've got important exams this term. Schoolwork really needs to come first.
 Bob _____?
- Mary Our parents say so and so do all the teachers. Besides, I want to do particularly well in these exams.
 Bob _____?
- Mary Because Dad says that I can go to France to see my French penpal if I do.
 Bob _____?
- Mary I want to go to France because it sounds like a very interesting place. Besides, I might want to do French at university.

5

A Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

1. Jill _____?
Jim I feel a bit better today, thanks.
2. Sue Bob mentioned someone called Anne. _____?
Jean Anne's Bob's new personal assistant.
3. Bill _____?
Anne I complained to the sales assistant, but she assured me that she would pass the complaint on to the manager of the department.
4. Bob _____?
Jill The restaurant opens at six o'clock.
5. Jack _____?
Dad I was six when we emigrated to America.

B Supply questions to the answers to complete the following dialogue:

- Bill You'd better start being more polite to Frank. He's your immediate boss now.
- Jack _____?
- Bill Since this morning. The managing director sent a memo round saying he's appointed Frank head of the design department.
_____?
- Jack This morning I was at a meeting with an important client. I haven't seen the memo. _____?
- Bill It said that Frank had been promoted to head of the design department and that the promotion would take effect immediately.
- Jack _____?
- Bill I don't know what happened to Bob, but he's obviously been sacked. Frank was always after his job, anyway.

Part 2 Using auxiliary verbs to ask questions

An **auxiliary verb** is sometimes known more informally as a **helping verb** because it helps another verb to perform a particular function. The auxiliary verb and the main verb together form a verb group. The auxiliary verbs are **be**, **have** and **do**.

Auxiliary verbs in questions are mostly used in what are known as **yes/no questions**. These are questions which expect to get the answer **yes** or **no** (or an equivalent expression of agreement or disagreement), although the answer may be **I don't know** (or an equivalent expression of doubt).

When **auxiliary verbs** are used in questions, they follow the pattern of other **yes/no questions** in that the verb comes before the subject. The rest of the verb group comes after the subject:

- *'Am I imagining the whole thing?'*
'No. I'm sure you're not.'
- *'Is she working this afternoon?'*
'No, she only works in the morning.'
- *'Are you still coming to the party?'*
'Yes, I'll be there.'
- *'Was Jack planning to emigrate with his parents?'*
'Yes. He was going to go with them, but he changed his mind and decided to stay here.'
- *'Were they distributing Christmas gifts to all the children?'*
'No. Only to the under-fives.'
- *'Has John been notified of the change?'*
'Yes. I wrote to him yesterday about it.'
- *'Have your parents given their consent to your marriage?'*
'Yes. They're very happy about it.'

- *'Had you always wanted to be a journalist when you joined The Times?'*
'No. I come from a family of teachers and I originally thought that I wanted to teach.'
- *'Do you still play tennis regularly?'*
'No. I just play occasionally now.'
- *'Does your mother still drive to work?'*
'She sometimes does, but she often takes the bus now.'
- *'Did Sue really steal Jane's coat?'*
'Jane thought so at first, but apparently it was a genuine mistake.'

When you are expecting the answer **no** to a question, you use the negative form of the verb. In most spoken and informal written contexts the negative form of the verb with **not** is contracted to **n't**. Thus, **is not** becomes **isn't**, **have not** becomes **haven't**, **did not** becomes **didn't**, and so on. Remember these contractions:

<i>is not</i>	=	<i>isn't</i>
<i>are not</i>	=	<i>aren't</i>
<i>was not</i>	=	<i>wasn't</i>
<i>were not</i>	=	<i>weren't</i>
<i>has not</i>	=	<i>hasn't</i>
<i>have not</i>	=	<i>haven't</i>
<i>had not</i>	=	<i>hadn't</i>
<i>do not</i>	=	<i>don't</i>
<i>does not</i>	=	<i>doesn't</i>
<i>did not</i>	=	<i>didn't</i>

Unit 1

AM, IS AND ARE

Am, is and **are** are the present tense of the verb **be**. When they are used with the present participle (**-ing** form) of a verb, they form the present continuous tense.

Am

How to use it

Am is the first person singular of the present tense of the verb **be**. You use **am** before the personal pronoun **I** in questions referring to the present, often in questions using the present continuous tense:

- *'Am I looking any thinner? I've been on a diet.'*
'Yes, I think you are.'
- *'Am I walking too quickly?'*
'You are, rather. I can't keep up with you.'
- *'Am I going in the right direction?'*
'I think so, but I'll just have a look at the map.'
- *'Am I being arrested, officer?'*
'No, sir. We just want to ask you a few questions about the accident.'
- *'Am I not reading the right marketing report, then?'*
'No, that's last month's. Here's the right one.'
- *'Am I not being considered for the post?'*
'No, you're not, I'm afraid. The other applicants are all better qualified than you.'
- *'Am I never going to find a job?'*
'I'm sure you'll find one soon. Don't get downhearted.'

Many auxiliary verbs take a contracted form when used with **not** in questions, such as **isn't** and **didn't**, but this is not the case with **am**. You do not use **am not** in

standard English. In informal English you sometimes use **aren't** as a contraction for **am not**:

- 'I'm making a fool of myself, **aren't I?**'
'You are rather!'
- 'I'm a bit late, **aren't I?**'
'Don't worry. You're not the last to arrive.'

You usually use **am** to refer to the present, but you can also use **am** to refer to the future:

- '**Am** I cooking dinner tomorrow evening?'
'No. I think it's my turn too cook tomorrow.'
- '**Am** I meeting you at the theatre?'
'Yes, if that's all right. I'll see you there at seven o'clock.'
- '**Am** I not driving you to the airport tomorrow?'
'No, thank you. I'm going with Jim, who's taking the same plane.'

Is

How to use it

Is is the third person singular of the present tense of the verb **be**. You use **is** before the personal pronouns **he**, **she** and **it**, before singular nouns, including proper nouns, before other pronouns, such as **no one**, in questions referring to the present, often in questions using the present continuous tense:

- '**Is** it still raining?'
'No. It's dry now.'
- '**Is** he driving her?'
'No. He's coming by train.'
- '**Is** she coping all right on her own?'
'Yes. She seems to be, although it's not easy being a single mother.'
- 'This campaign is very expensive. **Is** it producing the right result?'
'Yes. Our sales are up quite considerably.'

- *'Is Bill looking after the children?'*
'Yes. He's taking them to the cinema.'
- *'Is no one being held responsible for this tragic situation?'*
'Not as yet, but there is an investigation under way.'
- *'Is the patient's wife not aware of how seriously ill he is?'*
'She has been told, but I don't think she has taken it in yet.'
- *'Is the president not intending to take any action to improve the country's economic situation?'*
'He certainly has not announced any plans to do so.'
- *'Isn't the cleaner cleaning my office just now?'*
'No. She's still working downstairs.'
- *'Isn't Sue still working there?'*
'No. She left a few months ago.'
- *'Isn't the football match tonight?'*
'No. So many players are ill that they're postponing it.'
- *'Isn't anyone going to answer that phone?'*
'I'll answer it.'



Language Help

In informal contexts you can sometimes omit the auxiliary verb. For example, instead of saying:

- *'Is it still raining?'*

you can say:

- *'Still raining?'*

Instead of saying:

- *'Is Anne coming to the show?'*

you can say:

- *'Anne coming to the show?'*

You usually use **is** to refer to the present, but you can also use **is** to refer to the future:

- **'Is the gardener coming tomorrow?'**
'Yes. He wants to start early in the morning.'
- **'Is Sue coming to the party tomorrow evening?'**
'No. She can't get anyone to look after her children.'
- **'Isn't someone doing the catering for next month's reunion dinner?'**
'No. We're all going to bring along a dish we have made.'

is that everything?

Shop assistants often say this to customers to find out if the customer has completed their list of purchases:

- **'Is that everything today?'**
'Yes, thank you. How much does that come to?'
- **'Is that everything, Mrs White?'**
'Yes, thank you. How much do I owe you?'



Language Help

You can use **is that all?** in the same way. A more formal way of saying this is **will that be all?**:

- **'Will that be all, sir?'**
'Yes. That's all, thank you. How much is that?'

You can also use **will there be anything else?**, or, in informal contexts, **anything else?** in the same way:

- **'Will there be anything else today, Mrs Brown?'**
'No, thank you. That's all.'
- **'Anything else today, Anne?'**
'Yes. I'll have a slice of apple pie, please.'

is there ...?

You use **is there ...?** with a singular noun or pronoun when you want to know if something or someone is in a particular place or doing something in particular:

- *'Is there a caretaker living in the building?'*
'Yes, but he was ill at the time of the break-in.'
- *'Is there a unit working on this project?'*
'Not any more.'
- *'Is there someone taking notes?'*
'Yes. My secretary always takes notes at meetings.'
- *'Is there anyone waiting outside?'*
'No, not any more.'
- *'Is there an army unit stationed near the border?'*
'Yes. There's a large unit in the first border town you come to.'

Language Help ?

In certain informal contexts you can occasionally omit the auxiliary verb:

- *'Anyone there?'*
'It's just me, Mum. I'm making a hot drink.'

Are

How to use it

Are is the present tense plural of the verb **be**. You use **are** before the personal pronouns **we**, **you** and **they**, before plural nouns, including proper nouns, and before other pronouns, such as **others**, in questions referring to the present, often in questions using the present continuous tense:

- *'Are you listening to what I'm saying?'*
'Yes, I'm listening, although I don't quite understand.'
- *'Are your guests staying long?'*
'No. They're leaving early tomorrow morning.'
- *'Are you coming? We're going to be late.'*
'You go on ahead. I've still a few things to do.'

- **'Are** they paying enough attention to the cost of the project?'
'Yes. They're still well within our budget.'
- **'Are** we taking the right action over bullying?'
'I think so. It seems to have been quite effective so far.'
- **'Are** others paying the same rent as we are?'
'Some people are paying even more than we are.'
- **'Are** any of us in this department being recommended for promotion?'
'We don't yet know. The board is still considering the matter.'
- **'Are** Jane and Tom not working this evening?'
'Jane isn't, but Tom is.'
- **'Are** you not going to take into consideration the fact that the accused is a young child?'
'It is for the courts to make a decision on that.'
- **'Are** you not in danger of undoing all the good that has already been done?'
'I sincerely hope not.'
- **'Aren't** we acting a little prematurely?'
'No. I don't think we are. We need as much time as we can get.'
- **'Aren't** you still researching your family tree?'
'No. I had to give up the research, I'm afraid, for lack of time.'
- **'Aren't** any of you in favour of this scheme?'
'Absolutely not. We're all against it.'



Language Help

In informal contexts you can sometimes omit the auxiliary verb. For example, instead of saying:

- **'Are** you coming?'

you can say:

- **'Coming?'**

And, instead of:

- **'Are** you going anywhere interesting tonight?'

you can say:

- **'Going** anywhere interesting tonight?'

In informal English you sometimes use **aren't** as a contraction for **am not**. See under **am** above.

You usually use **are** to refer to the present, but you can also use **are** to refer to the future:

- **'Are** you studying at the weekend?'
'Yes, I'll have to. I have an exam next week.'
- **'Aren't** they renting the cottage for the whole summer?'
'No. They're renting it for three weeks.'
- **'Are** the guests coming to the reception by coach after the wedding service?'
'Most of them will be travelling in the two coaches provided, although a few will be taking their own cars.'

are there ...?

You use **are there ...?** with a plural noun or pronoun when you want to know if some things or some people are in a particular place or are doing something in particular:

- **'Are there** patients still waiting to be seen?'
'No, doctor. That was the last one.'
- **'Are there** workers complaining about overtime?'
'Yes. Several are complaining, in particular, about having to work every weekend.'
- **'Are there** people feeding the stray cats?'
'Yes. Two old ladies give them food twice a day.'
- **'Are there** students studying in the library?'
'No. They've all gone home.'



- **'Aren't** there children dying of malnutrition?'
'Of course there are, but, at least, there are many fewer now.'

are you being served?

Shop assistants often ask customers this question when they want to know if another shop assistant has already taken the customer's order:

- **'Are you being served, Mrs Brown?'**
'Yes, thank you.'
- **'Are you being served, Mr Jones?'**
'No. I'd like two large steaks, please.'



Language Help

- 1 A more formal way of saying this is **are you being attended to?**:
 - **'Are you being attended to, sir?'**
'No. I'd like to look at some silver brooches, please.'
- 2 In informal contexts you can omit the auxiliary verb and pronoun:
 - **'Being served, boys?'**
'No. Three white coffees, please.'
 - **'Being served, folks?'**
'No. Four beers, please.'

are you mad?

You use this expression when you are suggesting that someone is behaving in a way that is not at all sensible or rational:

- 'I've decided to hand in my notice.'
'Are you mad? Jobs are scarce at the moment. You should at least wait until you've got another job.'
'I can't stand my boss any longer!'

Language Help ?

You can also use **are you crazy?** in the same way in informal contexts.

- *'Jack and I have decided to get married right away.'*
'Are you mad? You've both just started university!'
'We're both going to carry on with our courses after we're married.'

are you OK?

You use **are you OK?** in informal contexts when you want to make sure that someone is not feeling ill, upset, etc:

- *'Are you OK, Anne? You look very pale.'*
'I've just had some bad news. My elder sister has been involved in a car accident and she's in hospital.'
'I'm sorry to hear that. I hope she will be all right.'
- *'Are you OK, Mum? You stumbled just now.'*
'I'm feeling rather dizzy, actually. I'd better sit down.'
'There's a park bench over there. If you don't feel better soon, I'll take you to a doctor.'

You can also use **are you all right?** in the same way, although it is not so informal as **are you OK?**:

- *'Are you all right, Sue? You look as though you've been crying.'*
'I've just had a terrible row with my boyfriend.'

are you sure?

You use **are you sure?** when you want to ask someone if they are confident that something they have said is true or correct:

- *'Jane has already left.'*
'Are you sure? I saw her this morning.'
'Yes. I gave her a lift to the station about an hour ago.'
- *'We leave the expressway at the next exit.'*
'Are you sure? I thought it was the one after that.'
'I'm absolutely certain. I checked it on the road map before we left.'
- *'George is the best person for the job.'*
'Are you sure? A lot of the applicants were very well qualified. We don't have to choose an in-house candidate.'
'Yes, I'm sure that George is the right choice. He has the right combination of experience and qualifications.'

? Language Help

- 1 You can put the adverb **quite** before **sure** for emphasis:
- *'I've decided to leave Jane.'*
'Are you quite sure? *You've been together a long time.'*
'I'm absolutely sure. We've been quarrelling all the time for ages. There's no point in going on.'

You can also use the adverbs **absolutely** or **completely** in this context.

- 2 In informal contexts you can use **sure?** instead of **are you sure?**:

- *'I'm feeling a bit better. I think I'll go to the party after all.'*
'Sure?'
'Yes. Let's go.'
- *'That's the wallpaper I like best.'*
'Sure?'
'Definitely. Let's go and order it.'

- 3 You can also use **are you certain?** in the same way as **are you sure?**, although it is a little more emphatic:

- *'Sam was the thief!'*
'Are you certain?'
'Absolutely! The police found all the stolen goods in his flat.'

Unit 2

WAS AND WERE

Was

How to use it

Was and **were** are the past tense of the verb **be**. When they are used with the present participle of a verb, they form the past continuous tense.

You use **was** before the personal pronouns **I, he, she** and **it**, and before singular nouns, including proper nouns, before other pronouns, such as **anyone**, in questions referring to the past, often in questions using the past continuous tense:

- *'Was I exaggerating how talented the young actor is?'*
'No. I don't think you were, but he simply doesn't have the experience for such a role.'
- *'Was she promising to pay back the money we loaned her?'*
'Yes, but I don't trust her to do that.'
- *'Was he intending to leave this morning?'*
'Yes, but he changed his plans and left last night.'
- *'Was the young man murdered?'*
'The police don't yet know.'
- *'Was anyone injured in the accident?'*
'No one was badly hurt, although a few people have minor injuries.'
- *'Was the child being abused?'*
'That might be the case. We are investigating the possibility.'
- *'Was the manager not available to talk to you?'*
'No. He was away at a sales conference.'
- *'Was the play not very popular?'*
'It certainly was not. In fact, it got very bad reviews.'

- *'Was the restaurant not open when you went there?'
'No. Apparently, it always closes on Mondays.'*
- *'Wasn't it snowing when you left?'
'No. It didn't start snowing until we were halfway here.'*
- *'Wasn't anyone living in the flat at the time of the fire?'
'No. The flat was empty.'*
- *'Wasn't someone being questioned by police yesterday?'
'Yes. They questioned a young man for several hours, but they let him go this morning without charging him.'*

was there ...?

You use **was there ...?** with a singular noun or pronoun when you want to know if something or someone was in a particular place or was doing something in particular:

- *'Was there a university being built there as long ago as that?'
'Yes, but it wasn't actually finished for several decades.'*
- *'Was there a woman travelling with a very young baby on board?'
'I certainly didn't see anyone with a young baby.'*
- *'Was there someone listening in on our conversation?'
'I sincerely hope not.'*
- *'Was there anyone paying any attention?'
'Not really. The speaker was extremely boring.'*
- *'Was there a train running along the track at the time?'
'No. Fortunately there was not.'*

Were

How to use it

You use **were** before the personal pronouns **we**, **you** and **they**, before plural nouns, including proper nouns, before other pronouns, such as **others**, in questions referring to the past, often in questions using the past continuous tense:

- *'Were we wasting our time in trying to help him?'*
'Yes. I think we were.'
- *'Were you closing the shop when the attack occurred?'*
'Yes. I had just locked the door when someone hit me on the head.'
- *'Were they both being deceived by their husbands?'*
'Yes. Unfortunately, they were.'
- *'Were they referring to the managing director?'*
'Yes. They were and it seems that their remarks were fully justified.'
- *'Were people listening to him?'*
'Yes, and they seemed to be agreeing with what he said.'
- *'Were others protesting as well as the students?'*
'No. It was just a student issue.'
- *'Were the young men actually charged with the theft?'*
'No. The police didn't have enough evidence to enable them to charge the youths.'
- *'Were the children not extremely disappointed when the picnic was cancelled?'*
'No. They had their food and played games in the village hall and had a wonderful time.'
- *'Weren't you surprised when Bob was dropped from the school team?'*
'No, not really. He's kept annoying the coach by not turning up for football practice.'
- *'Weren't the Smiths moving house yesterday?'*
No. They postponed their move till next week.'
- *'Weren't Sue and Bill playing in yesterday's tennis doubles match?'*
'No. They had to withdraw because Sue was ill.'

were there ...?

You use **were there ...?** with a plural noun or pronoun when you want to know if some things or some people were in a particular place or were doing something in particular:

- **'Were there** others working with you?'
'No. I was working by myself.'
- **'Were there** buses running at that time of night?'
'Yes. There's a 24-hour service.'
- **'Were there** people still waiting for trains?'
'Yes, there were. They didn't seem to know that they had all been cancelled.'
- **'Were there** machines still operating in the factory during the strike?'
'No. The whole factory was shut down.'
- **'Were there** cars still being assembled in the local factory then?'
'Yes, the components were produced elsewhere, but were put together here.'



The healthy option

Jill **Is** your birthday on Saturday, Sue?

Sue No. It's tomorrow, Tuesday, but my party's on Saturday. **Are** you coming?

Jill Of course. I'm looking forward to it. **Are** you doing anything to celebrate tomorrow?

Sue Yes, Dad's taking us out for a meal.

Jill **Is** he taking you to that new burger place? I was there last weekend.

Sue **Were** you? **Was** it good?

Jill It was very good. I really enjoyed it.

Sue **Are** there any healthy options on the menu? If not, we certainly won't be going there. My mum is trying to get us all to give up burgers and chips and eat salads and green vegetables. **Is** your mum doing the same?

Jill I had the burger and chips at the restaurant. My mum doesn't mind that if it's a special occasion. The rest of the time she tries to get us to eat healthily.

Sue **Was** your mum with you at the restaurant. **Was** it salad that she had?

Jill No. Mum wasn't there. Grandad took us and he let us eat what we wanted.

Catering for a party

- Sue **Is there** enough food in for the party?
- Liz No. I'll have to go to the supermarket in my lunch hour.
- Sue **Is there** anything I can do to help?
- Liz Thanks for offering. **Are** you, by any chance, going to the deli today?
- Sue Yes. I'm going after work. **Am** I right in thinking that it's open late tonight?
- Liz Yes. It's open till eight. **Were** you planning to go to the bakery counter?
- Sue Yes. I love their French bread. **Is** that what you would like?
- Liz Yes. I'd like three loaves, please. That's all.
- Sue **Are you sure?** I know what it's like catering for a party!
- Liz I'll have plenty of everything after I've been to the supermarket, thanks.
- Sue **Were** you thinking of going to the new one? If so, I wouldn't bother. It's far more expensive than the others.
- Liz **Is** that right? Thanks for the tip. I'll go to the one nearest my office.

Unit 3

HAS, HAVE AND HAD

Has and **have** are the present tense of the verb **have**. When they are used with the past participle of a verb, they form the present perfect tense or the present perfect continuous tense. **Had** is the past tense of the verb **have**. When it is used with the past participle of a verb, it forms the past perfect tense.

Has

How to use it

You use **has** before the personal pronouns **he**, **she** and **it**, before a singular noun, including proper nouns, before other pronouns, such as **everyone**, in questions referring to the past which use the perfect tense:

- *'Has he finished the essay?'*
'Not quite.'
- *'Has she been treated with antibiotics?'*
'Yes, but they haven't made her any better.'
- *'Has it stopped snowing yet?'*
'Yes, and most of the snow has melted.'
- *'Has everyone been working this week?'*
'No. Jill and Sue have been on holiday.'
- *'Has the successful candidate not been offered the job yet?'*
'Not yet. My secretary is just typing a letter to him.'
- *'Has it not occurred to you that he might be telling the truth?'*
'I think that's very unlikely.'
- *'Has it not become obvious to you that she is not coping?'*
'Not really. She's been very ill and has only just come back to work.'

- *'Hasn't anyone been offered a place in the football team yet?'*
'No. The manager and the coach are still considering various players.'
- *'Hasn't she iced the cake yet?'*
'No. She's waiting for it to cool.'
- *'Hasn't the postman delivered the letters yet?'*
'No. He's often late on a Monday.'

has ... got ...?

You can often use **has ... got ...?** instead of just **has** without any change of meaning. When **has** is accompanied by **got** in this way, **has** is an auxiliary verb:

- *'Has she got any idea of how much trouble she's caused?'*
'She has and she's very sorry.'
- *'Has Jane got any children?'*
'Yes. She has a son and two daughters.'
- *'Has he got a broken leg?'*
'No. His leg's been X-rayed and apparently it's just badly sprained.'
- *'Has he got the authority to do that?'*
'No. He had no right to act like that.'
- *'Has Bob got enough money for the rent this month?'*
'Yes. He paid it yesterday.'

has there been ...?

You use **has there been ...?** with a singular noun or pronoun when you want to know if something or someone has been in a particular place or has been doing something in particular:

- *'Has there been anyone riding this horse this morning?'*
'No.'
- *'Has there been a man asking questions about my father?'*
'Yes, but I didn't tell him anything.'
- *'Has there ever been a church built on this site?'*
'Yes. According to our records, there was an ancient church here before the castle was built.'

Have

How to use it

You use **have** before the personal pronouns **I, we, you** and **they**, before plural nouns, including proper nouns, before other pronouns, such as **others**, in questions referring to the past which use the perfect tense:

- *'Have you asked Jane to marry you yet?'*
'No. I haven't yet plucked up enough courage.'
- *'Have they decided where they are going to live?'*
'Yes. They're looking for a flat in the city centre.'
- *'Have I chosen the right person for the job, do you think?'*
'It's difficult to say. You'll just have to wait and see.'
- *'Have we succeeded in taking over the company?'*
'It's looking hopeful, but we won't know until tomorrow morning.'
- *'Have others already been turned down for the post?'*
'Yes. In fact the company has recently re-advertised the post.'
- *'Have you eaten enough?'*
'Yes, thanks. That was delicious.'
- *'Have the police not already searched his house?'*
'No. They had to get a search warrant.'
- *'Have John's parents not given their blessing to his engagement?'*
'No. In fact, they're trying to prevent him getting married.'
- *'Haven't you just been deceived by your best friend?'*
'Yes, but I simply can't believe it.'
- *'Haven't the students been reported to the police?'*
'No. The principal has decided to handle the matter himself.'
- *'Haven't several soldiers already been killed?'*
'Yes. That's why many people are calling on the government to withdraw our troops.'



Language Help

1 In informal contexts you can sometimes omit the auxiliary verb **have** and the pronoun **you**. Thus instead of saying:

- ***Have you seen** any strangers around here recently?*

you can say:

- ***Seen** any strangers around here recently?*

Instead of saying:

- ***Have you listened** to your new CD yet?*

you can say:

- ***Listened** to your new CD yet?*

2 In informal contexts you can sometimes omit the auxiliary verb **have** from **have had**. For example, instead of saying:

- ***Have** you **had** enough wine?*

you can say:

- ***Had** enough wine?*

have ... got ...?

You can often use **have ... got ...** instead of just **have** without any change of meaning. When **have** is accompanied by **got** in this way, **have** is an auxiliary verb:

- *'**Have** you **got** enough money for the train fare?'*
'Yes. I've got just enough.'
- *'**Have** they **got** time to call in on their way home?'*
'No. They're already late.'
- *'**Have** they **got** a garden?'*
'No, just a patio.'

- *'Have the workers **got** the necessary skills to do this job?'*
'Yes, I'm sure they have.'
- *'Have you **got** the feeling that the situation is getting out of control?'*
'Yes, I do. I think we should call the police.'

Language Help

In informal contexts you can sometimes omit the auxiliary verb **have** from **have got**. For example, instead of saying:

- *Have you **got** time for a coffee?*

you can say:

- ***Got** time for a coffee?*

or even:

- ***Time** for a coffee?*

have I got news for you?

This is a cliché used in informal contexts when you are about to tell someone something that you think they will find surprising and probably unwelcome:

- *'Jim is such a nice, honourable man. He's going to make Sue a wonderful husband.'*
'Have I got news for you? Sue has just discovered that Jim is still married and still living with his wife.'
- *'I'm expecting quite a large salary increase this year and I really need the extra money to pay my mortgage.'*
'Have I got news for you? The boss has just announced that no one's getting an increase this year.'

have there been ...?

You use **have there been ...?** with a plural noun or pronoun when you want to

know if some things or some people have been in a particular place or have been doing something in particular:

- *'Have there been any applications sent in for the post?'*
'No. We think the salary is much too low.'
- *'Have there been more riots taking place?'*
'No. Police say that it has been quiet overnight.'
- *'Have there been students making enquiries about college places?'*
'Not many. It's a bit early in the term.'

Language Help

In informal contexts you can occasionally omit the auxiliary verb **have** and **there**. Thus instead of saying:

- *Have there been any more break-ins around there?*

you can say:

- *Been any more break-ins around there?*

Had

How to use it

You use **had** before the personal pronouns **I, you, he, she, it, we** and **they**, before nouns, including proper nouns, and other pronouns in questions referring to the past which use the past perfect tense:

- *'Had you forgotten that it was your mother's birthday yesterday?'*
'Yes, but I'm going to see her today and I'm taking a large bunch of flowers and some chocolates.'
- *'Had John been murdered or had he committed suicide?'*
'No one was ever sure.'

- *'Had they locked the shop doors properly when they left for the night?'
'Obviously not.'*
- *'Had the residents of the flats been evacuated by the time the police got there?'
'Yes. Members of the fire service had cleared the building immediately they arrived on the scene.'*
- *'Had no one owned up to the theft by the end of the school day?'
'No, and the principal then carried out his threat to put the whole class in detention.'*
- *'Had they not realized that they were in danger?'
'No. It seems that they had had no idea of the risks they were taking.'*
- *'Had she not grasped the fact that he was not to be trusted by then?'
'Of course not. Otherwise she wouldn't have married him.'*
- *'Hadh't it struck them that their son might have had an accident?'
'No. Apparently, he was in the habit of not coming home at night.'*
- *'Hadh't she been exaggerating how ill she was?'
'No. That's what everyone thought, but it turned out that she was very ill.'*
- *'Hadh't she gone to university straight from school?'
'No. She had worked in the family firm for a couple of years before starting her medical studies.'*

had there been ...?

You use **had there been ...?** with a plural noun or pronoun when you want to know if some things or people have been in a particular place or have been doing something in particular:

- *'Had there been police patrolling the area for some time?'
'Yes, ever since the student riots.'*
- *'Had there been foster parents looking after all the orphaned children?'
'No. A few of them had been cared for by members of their families.'*

The missing football jersey

- Bill Mum, **have** you seen my football jersey? I can't find it.
- Mum I put it in the bottom drawer in your room yesterday after I'd washed it. **Haven't** you looked there?
- Bill It's not there. I've looked everywhere in my room.
- Mum **Haven't** you put in your sports holdall? You usually do that the night before a match.
- Bill No. I was going to do that this morning.
- Mum **Have** you **got** your other one? It's quite old but it's clean and in good condition. It'll do for one match.
- Bill I lent it to Tom Brown. He's a new boy who's just got a place in the team and he hasn't had time to buy a football jersey. What are you laughing at, Mum?
- Mum **Have** you seen your little sister this morning?
- Bill No, I haven't. Why? **Has** she gone missing?
- Mum No, thank goodness. She's wearing your football jersey over her fairy dress!

Bullying

- Teacher** **Has** Tom said anything to you or his father about being bullied, Mrs Black?
- Mrs Black** No, he hasn't said anything to me and my husband has been working overseas for the last few weeks. **Has** Tom said anything to you?
- Teacher** No. One of Tom's friends has told his parents that he and Tom are being badly bullied by two older boys. I thought the mother was going to speak to you. **Hasn't** she done so?
- Mrs Black** No. **Have** you **had** any other reports of bullying recently?
- Teacher** Yes, I'm afraid we have.
- Mrs Black** **Hasn't** the school got a strategy to deal with bullying?
- Teacher** Yes. We are in the process of adopting a new strategy, having taken expert advice. **Haven't** you received a letter about it?
- Mrs Black** No. **Have** you been given any proof that Tom's friend is telling the truth about the bullying?
- Teacher** There are signs that the student has been physically abused and he is very depressed. **Have** there been any signs of mood change in Tom?
- Mrs Black** No, but you've got me worried. I'll talk to Tom.

Unit 4

DO, DOES AND DID

Do and **does** are the present tense of the verb **do**. **Did** is the past tense.

Do

How to use it

You use **do** before the personal pronouns **I**, **we**, **you** and **they** and before plural nouns, including proper nouns, and other pronouns, such as **others**, and sometimes before **there**, in questions referring to the present:

- *'Do I need to apply in writing?'*
'Yes, you do, and please enclose a copy of your CV.'
- *'Do you really believe his story?'*
'Yes, I do, although I know it doesn't sound very credible.'
- *'Do we need more part-time workers to get the job finished on time?'*
'I don't think so, but I'll have a clearer idea next week.'
- *'Do the students learn to cook at school?'*
'No, they don't, unless they are studying home economics as a subject.'
- *'Do many others agree with Tom's objections to the scheme?'*
'No. Most people think his objections are completely unreasonable.'
- *'Do there seem to be valid grounds for their objections?'*
'No. They just don't want to have a hostel for the homeless anywhere in the town.'
- *'Do there appear to be any acceptable alternatives to this scheme?'*
'None has been put forward, so far.'

- *'Do parents not realize that the school needs help with fund-raising activities?'*
'Oh, I think that most of them are aware of that, but a lot of them think that they are much too busy to spare the time to help.'
- *'Do the directors not appreciate how worried the workers are about their jobs?'*
'Yes, they do, but they can't make a statement about the future of the firm until the merger agreement has been signed.'
- *'Do we not have to sign a rental agreement for the flat?'*
'No. Anne's brother has kindly agreed to lend us it for three months.'
- *'Don't you know who your new neighbour is?'*
'No. I haven't met her yet.'
- *'Don't they want to do well in the exams?'*
'I think they probably do. It's just that some of them don't want to do any extra work!'

do you know (someone or something)?

You use **do you know** (someone or something)? when you want to know if someone is familiar with a person, place, etc:

- *'Do you know Jim's wife?'*
'No. I've never met her.'
- *'Do you know Sue Brown?'*
'I know her slightly.'
- *'Do you know the Indian restaurant in Bath Street?'*
'Yes. My husband and I go there a lot.'
- *'Do you know a hotel called Seahaven in the village?'*
'No. I've never heard of it.'



Language Help

1 You can add the adverb **well** if you want to know if someone is very familiar with a person or place:

- *'Do you know the Smiths well?'*
'Yes. We live next door to them.'

2 In informal contexts you can omit the auxiliary verb and the pronoun **you**:

- **'Know** him well?'
'Hardly at all.'

do you know ...?

You can use **do you know ...?**, often with a noun clause, to ask someone if they know something or if they have information about something:

- **'Do you know** the answer to the question?'
'No, but I can find out.'
- **'Do you know** where he lives?'
'No, I don't.'
- **'Do you know** when they are due to arrive?'
'Some time this afternoon.'
- **'Do you know** how to work this machine?'
'No, but here are the instructions.'



Language Help

In informal contexts you can omit the auxiliary verb and the pronoun **you**:

- **'Know** where she lives now?'
'No idea.'
- **'Know** when the train leaves?'
'In about five minutes.'

do you know what I mean?

You use this expression when you want to ask if someone has fully understood what you have said:

- *'There's something about Jack that I don't trust. Do you know what I mean?'*
'Yes, I do. I feel the same way about him.'

- 'I love the children dearly, but I just have to get away from them sometimes. **Do you know what I mean?**'
'Of course. We all need some personal space from time to time.'

Language Help

In a more informal context you can omit the auxiliary verb and say **know what I mean?**:

- 'She's just a bit too nice for my liking? **Know what I mean?**'
'I know exactly what you mean. Her niceness doesn't seem very genuine.'

do you mind if ...?

- 1 You use **do you mind if ...?** when you want to ask someone politely if you have their permission to do something:
 - '**Do you mind if I close this window?**'
'No, not at all.'
 - '**Do you mind if I move this desk?**'
'No. No one is using it today.'

Language Help

1 You can also use **would you mind if ...?** with the same meaning as **do you mind if...?**:

- '**Would you mind if I borrow this pen?**'
'No. Help yourself.'
- '**Would you mind if I use this computer?**'
'No. Go ahead.'

2 In an informal context you can omit the auxiliary or modal verb and the pronoun:

- '**Mind if I open this window?**'
'Not at all. It's very stuffy in here.'

- **'Mind** if I borrow this pen?'
'No. Go ahead.'

do you mind ...?

You use **do you mind ...?** when you want to ask someone politely if they will do something for you:

- **'Do you mind** lending me your copy of the report?'
'No, of course not. Here it is.'
- **'Do you mind** waiting a bit longer?'
'No. I'm not in any hurry.'



Language Help

- 1 You can also use **would you mind ...?** with the same meaning as **do you mind ...?**:
 - **'Would you mind** moving your car? I can't get mine out.'
'Sorry. I'll go and do that now.'
 - **'Would you mind** looking after the children this afternoon?'
'Of course not. I love having them.'
- 2 In an informal context you can omit the auxiliary or modal verb and the pronoun **you**:
 - **'Mind** posting this for me?'
'No. I'm going to the post office, anyway.'
 - **'Mind** holding the baby while I answer the phone?'
'No. I'd love to.'

do you want ...?

You use this expression in rather informal contexts when you are asking someone if they would like to have something or like to do something:

- *'Do you want another drink?'*
'No, thanks. I've had enough.'
- *'Do you want some more dessert?'*
'Yes, please. It's delicious.'
- *'We're going to the cinema. Do you want to join us?'*
'I'd love to, but I have to finish an essay.'
- *'Do you want to come for a walk?'*
'Yes. I'm in need of some exercise.'



Language Help

- 1 In informal contexts you can omit the auxiliary verb and say simply **want ...?**
 - *'Want some coffee?'*
'Yes, thanks. Black, no sugar.'
 - *'Want to come for a walk?'*
'No, thanks. There's a TV programme I want to watch.'
- 2 In informal contexts you can also sometimes omit the main verb **want**:
 - *'More coffee?'*
'No, thanks.'
 - *'Coming for a walk?'*
'Sure. I need some fresh air.'

A more formal and more polite way of saying **do you want?** is **would you like ...?:**

- *'Would you like a glass of wine?'*
'No, thanks. I'm driving.'

- *'Would you like a piece of cake?'*
'Yes, thank you, but just a small piece, please.'



- *'Would you like to come shopping with me?'*
'That would be very nice, but I have to work this afternoon.'

Language Help

In informal contexts you can omit the modal verb and pronoun and just use the verb **like**:

- *'Like an apple?'*
'Yes, please.'
- *'Like some tea?'*
'Please.'

In informal contexts you can also sometimes omit the main verb **like**:

- *'A glass of wine?'*
'No, thanks. I'm driving.'

Does

How to use it

You use **does** before the personal pronouns **he, she, it** and before singular nouns, including proper nouns, and other pronouns, such as **anyone**, and sometimes before **there** in questions referring to the present:

- *'Does he teach history?'*
'Yes, and he teaches modern studies, too.'
- *'Does she still live with her parents?'*
'No. She moved into a rented flat last month.'
- *'Does it snow much here in the winter?'*
'No. It hardly ever snows here.'
- *'Does your teacher know that you are being bullied?'*
'No. I'm scared to tell him in case the bullies find out.'
- *'Does anyone know where Jim lives?'*
'I know he lives in Queen Street, but I don't know which number.'
- *'Does Sally still love him?'*
'I think she does.'
- *'Does it not strike you as strange that Tom disappeared as soon the boss found out that a large sum of money had gone missing?'*
'I must admit that that looks suspicious, but it could just be a coincidence.'
- *'Does the principal not believe the student's accusation?'*
'No. He thinks she has made the story up just to get the teacher into trouble.'
- *'Does there seem to be any improvement in the student's work?'*
'Unfortunately, not.'
- *'Does there appear to be any motive for the crime?'*
'There's no obvious motive.'
- *'Does there happen to be any connection between the events?'*
'Not as far as we know.'



Language Help

When **does** is used in questions with **not** it sometimes expects the answer **no** and the contracted form **doesn't** is often used, particularly in spoken and informal English:

- **'Doesn't** she want to stay at home and look after her child?'
'Yes, she does, very much. Unfortunately, she has to go to work to make a living for her and the baby.'
- **'Doesn't** Bill regret dropping out of university?'
'No, not really. After all, he's become a very successful businessman.'
- **'Doesn't** it usually rain there at this time of year?'
'It does, but, apparently, it's been exceptionally dry for weeks now.'

Did

How to use it

You use **did** before the personal pronouns **I, we, you, he, she, it** and **they** and before singular and plural nouns, including proper nouns, and other pronouns, such as **anyone** and **others**, and sometimes before **there**, in questions referring to the past:

- **'Did** he want to go to university?'
'Yes, he did, but, unfortunately, he didn't do well enough in the exams.'
- **'Did** she really report her husband to the police?'
'Yes. She did it because she actually saw him attack the girl.'
- **'Did** it rain heavily last night?'
'No. It was just a drizzle.'
- **'Did** we get an invitation to Jane's wedding?'
'No, not yet, but I'm sure we will get one.'

- *'Did you apologize to her?'*
'Yes, but she refused to accept my apology.'
- *'Did they try to economize?'*
'They say they did, but, as you know, they're both incredibly extravagant people.'
- *'Did the dog actually bite you?'*
'No, it just snarled and jumped up at me.'
- *'Did there seem to be a problem with the car engine?'*
'No. Apparently, there was something wrong with the brakes.'
- *'Did there appear to be any obvious reason for Bob's hatred of his brother?'*
'No. Indeed his brother has always been supportive of Bob.'
- *'Did her family not make any attempt to help her?'*
'No. In fact, they threw her out of the family home.'
- *'Did Sue not know that her husband was having an affair?'*
'Apparently, she didn't and she was devastated when she found out.'



Language Help

When **did** is used in questions with **not** it usually expects the answer **no** and the contracted form **didn't** is often used, particularly in spoken and informal English:

- *'Didn't Jim's parents tell him that he was adopted?'*
'No. He didn't find out about that until they were both dead.'
- *'Didn't Tom apologize for not turning up for dinner?'*
'No. He simply said that he had forgotten.'
- *'Didn't you find a flat you liked?'*
'No. We're going to have to keep looking.'

did you know that ...?

You use **did you know that ...?** to ask someone if they had had information about something, often something that is unknown to many or surprising:

- *'Did you know that the firm was experiencing cash-flow problems?'*
'No. Like everyone else in the firm, I thought it was doing very well.'
- *'Did you know that Tom was seriously ill?'*
'No. None of us knew until he died. That's what he wanted.'
- *'Did you know that Jill was planning to leave?'*
'Yes, I did, but she made me promise not to tell anyone.'

Language Help

You can use **did you know** someone or something when you want to know if someone was familiar with a person, place, etc:

- *'Did you know Jim's parents?'*
'Yes, I did, but they're both dead now.'
- *'Did you know the area where the murders took place?'*
'I once knew the area very well. I went to primary school there.'

Spanish lessons

- Meg **Do you want** to come and have tea with me today?
- Liz **Do you mind** if I don't? I'd love to come, but Mum asked me to do some shopping after school.
- Meg Of course I don't mind. I know how busy your mum is. **Want** to come tomorrow instead?
- Liz Yes, thanks. That would be lovely. **Did** you say that you have a friend coming to stay?
- Meg Yes. She's coming tomorrow morning. She's from Spain. I'd love to go there. **Didn't** your parents live there at one point?
- Liz Yes. They both studied in Madrid after being at university here. **Does** your friend speak English?
- Meg Oh, yes. She's bilingual. Her mother's English. She and my mother were at drama college together. I want her to teach me Spanish. **Do** you speak Spanish?
- Liz My parents have taught me a little, but I'm going to take Spanish lessons in the summer holidays.
- Meg **Do you think** you could mention that to my mother when you come round for tea? I'd love to take Spanish lessons. **Mind if** I come along.
- Liz No. That would be great fun. **Do you know** my cousin Jill? She's coming. The more the merrier!

Catching up on news

- Jim** Did you know the man who was killed in the car accident?
- Jack** No, I didn't, but he was called Bob Brown. He worked with my cousin, Bill Green.
- Jim** I didn't know Bill was your cousin. Do you see him often?
- Jack** Not very often, but we meet occasionally for a drink. Do you know him well?
- Jim** Quite well. We belong to the same golf club. Does he still go out with Sue Jones?
- Jack** No. Bill and Sue split up a few weeks ago. Didn't you go out with Sue's sister for a while?
- Jim** Yes. Anne and I were together for a while, but it didn't work out.
- Jack** That's a pity. I'm just off to Sardini's to get a coffee. Want to join me?
- Jim** Didn't Sardini's close down recently?
- Jack** I'd forgotten about that. Do you know if the Coffee Hut is open?
- Jim** I'm sure it will be. Let's go there.

PRACTICE

1 A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

is has were am had

- _____ I going in the right direction?
- _____ she given you the correct instructions?
- _____ it still working? It looks like a very old machine.
- _____ you forgotten that we were coming?
- _____ the Browns intending to leave so soon?

B Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

- Mary _____?
Liz No. The dress doesn't fit.
- Sue _____?
Mary Yes. I've done this kind of work before, but the system is new to me.
- Jack _____?
John Yes. It's stopped raining, but the sky is still quite black.
- Bob _____?
Sam No. According to the police, the burglars left no fingerprints.
- Liz _____?
Sally Yes. Tom was at the party. He was the first to arrive.

2 A Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

- Jim _____?
Jill No. I'm not OK. I feel sick and dizzy.
- Sue _____?
Jean Yes. I was at work yesterday. Why do you ask?
- Bill _____?
Jane Yes. I know that part of the country very well indeed. I grew up there.

4. Anne _____?
Jill No. I'm not going to buy a new car. I'm going to use public transport.
5. Jim _____?
Bob No. Tom doesn't have a regular job, but he's looking for one.

B Supply questions to the answers to complete the following dialogue:

A rejected offer

- Jane _____?
- Tom Yes. Sue and Bill put an offer in for the flat.
- Jane _____?
- Tom No. Their offer hasn't yet been accepted. Bill just phoned me.
- Jane _____?
- Tom No. I don't know why the offer hasn't been accepted yet. It's probably something to do with money.
- Jane _____?
- Tom Yes. It does look as though their offer might have been too low.
- Jane _____?
- Tom No. It doesn't necessarily mean that they won't get the flat. They might be asked to put in a higher offer. Their lawyer will advise them.

3

A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

hasn't do doesn't was don't

- _____ they usually deliver goods to customers?
- _____ he given responsibility for the security of the building?
- _____ there seem to be any grounds at all for their suspicions?
- _____ it seem odd to you that Anne left without leaving any message for her husband or family?
- _____ there been enough trouble in this family already?

B *Rephrase the following questions in a more informal way:*

1. Do you want another coffee?

_____?

2. Are you coming with us?

_____?

3. Have you had enough to eat?

_____?

4. Do you know what I mean?

_____?

5. Have you got time for a chat?

_____?

4 **A** *Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:*

1. Amy _____?

Sue No. I haven't booked a holiday yet. I'm going later in the year.

2. Bob _____?

Bill No. There was no sign of a break-in. The attacker must have had a key.

3. Anne Sue seems a little strange these days. _____?

Jane Yes. I know exactly what you mean. She hardly speaks to anyone.

4. Sue _____?

Jane No. I wasn't really surprised at not getting the job. I knew I didn't have enough experience.

5. Jack _____?

Liz Yes. There were other people waiting for the last bus, but I didn't know any of them.

B *Rephrase the following questions in a more formal way:*

1. Another biscuit?

_____?

3. Going far?

_____?

4. Sure?

_____?

4. Had enough tea?

_____?

5. Milk?

_____?

5

A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

has does isn't haven't were

1. _____ the tenants been informed of the increased rents yet?

2. _____ Tom really think he can get away with this?

3. _____ anyone been charged with the assault?

4. _____ there any items missing from your briefcase?

5. _____ it clear that the thefts were carried out by a member of staff?

B Rephrase the following questions in a more formal way:

1. Still snowing?

_____?

2. Anything else?

_____?

3. Being served, girls?

_____?

4. I'm a fool, aren't I?

_____?

5. Been any muggings here?

_____?

Part 3 Using modal verbs to ask questions

A **modal verb** is a special kind of **auxiliary verb**. Like auxiliary verbs, **modal verbs** are always used with the **base form** (the infinitive without to) of ordinary action verbs. The purpose of modal verbs is to add to the ordinary action verb a feeling of the action being, for example, possible, likely, necessary, certain, compulsory, allowed or advisable.

The modal verbs dealt with in this section are **can, could, may, might, shall, will, would, should** and **must**.

Modal verbs do not have inflections. This means that they do not have an 's' form in the third person singular and there are no 'ing' or 'ed' forms.

Questions using modal verbs are formed by putting the modal verb in front of the subject:

- *Can you speak English?*
- *Will he come?*

The negative of modal verbs is formed by putting **not** after the modal verb. The negative of modal verbs is usually found in the contracted form, such as **can't, couldn't, wouldn't**, except in formal contexts.



Language Help

The contracted negative form of **will** is **won't**:

- *'Won't the car start?'*

Modal verbs can be used to indicate a wide range of meanings. For example, they are commonly used to indicate:

Ability

- *Can the child read?*
- *Can you hear a bell ringing?*
- *Can he operate the machine?*
- *Could he tell the time when he was three?*
- *Could the child have been writing his own name at that age?*
- *Could he see after the operation?*

Possibility

- *Can you arrange the job interviews for the week after next?*
- *Could we have dinner tomorrow night instead? I have to work late tonight.*
- *Could anyone have gained access to your pin number?*
- *Might we rearrange our lunch meeting? I have to go to a funeral tomorrow, I'm afraid.*
- *Might she have been telling the truth, after all?*
- *Will she ever be able to walk again?*
- *Would you recognize the car that nearly ran you down?*
- *Would a blood transfusion have saved her life?*

Requests, including requests for help, or requests for advice or opinions

- *Can you pass me a copy of that marketing report? I have to read it before the meeting.*
- *Could you hold this while I unlock the door?*
- *May I see some form of ID, please?*
- *Will you take the baby to the park?*
- *Would you help me move this bookcase, please?*
- *Should we camp here or go on a bit further?*
- *Should I have waited a bit longer before making a decision?*

Offers and invitations

- *Can I give you a hand with those heavy bags?*
- *I'm sorry about the delay in bringing your meal? May I offer you a complimentary drink by way of compensation?*
- *Will you have another coffee?*
- *Would you like a chocolate?*
- *We're just about to have tea. Will you join us?*
- *Will you stay and have a meal with us? We'll be having dinner in about an hour and you'd be very welcome.*
- *Shall we leave the flower with your neighbour if you are out?*

Permission

- *Can I borrow your car? Mine's broken down and I need to collect the children from nursery.*
- *Could I use your computer for a few minutes? I want to send an urgent email.*
- *May we view the property this afternoon?*
- *Might the children play with the toys in the waiting room?*

Suggestions, advice, comments

- *Your back pain seems to be very bad. Can I recommend my physiotherapist to you?*
- *Couldn't you get Liz to collect the children?*
- *May I propose that we take a break for lunch now?*
- *Might I point out that we have already made a formal decision on that issue?*
- *Shall we go home now?*
- *Shall I get some steaks for tonight?*
- *Shouldn't we send for a doctor?*

Unit 1

CAN AND COULD

Can

How to use it

- 1 You can use **can** to ask if someone has a particular ability, skill or knowledge:
 - *'Can you repair this watch for me? It's very old.'*
'I'll see what I can do.'
 - *'Can they speak French?'*
'No. None of them can.'
 - *'Can the child walk?'*
'Yes, but he has a very sore leg.'
 - *'Can you tell me your name, little girl?'*
'Emma.'
 - *'Can Sue cook?'*
'Yes. In fact, she's a very good cook.'



Language Help

- 1 You use **could** to ask if someone had the ability, skill or knowledge to do something in the past:
 - *'Could your grandfather play the piano?'*
'Yes, he could. In fact, he was a very good pianist.'
- 2 In more formal contexts you can use **is/are/will be .../able to ...?** instead of **can**:

- *'Is the stroke victim **able to** speak?'*
'No, doctor. I'm afraid not.'
- *'**Are** the children **able to** dress themselves?'*
'The older ones are, but not the younger ones.'
- *'**Will** he **be able to** walk after the operation?'*
'The surgeons say that it will be several weeks before they know.'

You can also use the contracted negative form **can't** in questions, often when you are expecting a negative answer:

- *'**Can't** the children ski?'*
'Not yet, but they're taking lessons.'
- *'**Can't** they operate on the old man?'*
'No. The surgeon says that he is much too weak.'

When you use **can't** in a question in this context, you are sometimes indicating annoyance or exasperation:

- *'**Can't** the police do anything about all this graffiti?'*
'They say they haven't the resources to prevent it.'
- *'**Can't** they understand these simple instructions?'*
'It appears not. Otherwise, they wouldn't keep getting things so wrong.'

When you use **can't** in a question in this context, you are sometimes trying to be more emphatic or more persuasive, especially if you include the word **possibly**:

- *'**Can't** you do something to speed the process up?'*
'Sorry, I can't.'
- *'**Can't** you just let me take the bag on the plane with me?'*
'Sorry, I can't. It's too big.'
- *'**Can't** you **possibly** look after the children just for a little while, Mum?'*
'Oh, all right, Jane, but you'll have to be back by lunch time.'

2 You can use **can** to ask if someone is aware of something through their senses:

- *'Can you hear a phone ringing?'*
'No. I think the noise is coming from the TV.'
- *'Can you see that bird over there?'*
'No. I'm very short-sighted.'
- *'Can you feel this pin pricking your foot?'*
'Ouch! Yes.'
- *'Can you smell burning?'*
'Yes. Bob's lit a bonfire to burn some old wood.'

Language Help

You can use **can't** in this sense, often when you are expecting a negative answer to a question in an informal context:

- *'Can't you hear the doorbell ringing?'*
'No, sorry. I'm slightly deaf.'
- *'Can't you smell something nasty in here?'*
'Yes. I think the cat's been sick.'

3 You can use **can** to ask if something relating to the present or future is likely or possible:

- *'Can anything worse happen to the hostages?'*
'Yes. They could be left to die of starvation.'
- *'Can you two cook the meal tonight? I have to work late.'*
'I can, but Jane won't be able to. She's doing an evening class.'
- *'Can you send an ambulance as soon as possible? Someone has collapsed in the street.'*
'Yes, certainly. Give me the address, please?'
- *'We've had to cancel tonight's meeting. Can you come tomorrow night, instead?'*
'No, I'm sorry. I have theatre tickets for tomorrow night.'
- *'The holiday cottage is fully booked for those two weeks. Can you come the following two weeks?'*
'No. I'm afraid not. I couldn't get away from work then.'



Language Help

In this context you can often use **could** instead of **can**. This use is sometimes considered to be slightly more polite or more formal:

- *'Could you change shifts with me tomorrow? I'm on night shift and my wife's away. I have to look after the kids.'*
'I'm sorry. I can't work tomorrow night. I'm visiting my parents and staying overnight.'

4 You use **can**, usually with the pronoun **you**, to make a request of someone, often to ask someone to help you in some way or to do something for you:

- *'Can you lend me money for lunch, Joe? I've left my wallet in the office.'*
'Sure. How much do you need?'
- *'Can you show me the way to the station, please?'*
'Certainly. Turn right at the end of this street and then go straight on till you come to the station.'
- *'Can you give me a hand to move this sofa over there?'*
'OK. Where exactly do you want to put it?'
- *'Can you tell me the time, please? My watch has stopped.'*
'It's five past six.'
- *'Hello. Can you help me? I want to speak to a supervisor about my gas bill.'*
'I'll just put you on hold until the supervisor's free.'



Language Help

1 You can make your request sound more polite or more persuasive by adding **possibly** to the question:

- *'Can you possibly give me a lift to the city? My car has broken down.'*
'Certainly! Jump in.'
- *'Can you possibly help me get this car started?'*
'I'll try. You get behind the wheel and I'll push the car.'

2 You can often also use **could** in this context. This use is sometimes considered to be slightly more polite or more formal than using **can**:

- *'Could you help me carry this wardrobe downstairs?'*
'Certainly. Just wait till I take my jacket off.'
- *'Could you give me some career advice, please?'*
'By all means. What would you like to know?'

5 You use **can** with **I** and **we** when you are asking permission to do something. You can also use **can** with **he, she** or **they** or with noun phrases when you are asking permission on behalf of someone else:

- *'Can I park my car here for a few minutes?'*
'No, I'm afraid not. This space is reserved for hospital staff.'
- *'Can I switch this light on? It's a bit dark in here.'*
'Yes. Go ahead.'
- *'Can I have a biscuit?'*
'Certainly. Help yourself.'
- *'Can we walk across this field?'*
'Yes, you can as long as you shut the gate to stop the sheep getting out.'
- *'Can we borrow these books?'*
'No, sorry. These are reference books. You can't take them away from the library.'
- *'My clients are interested in the house. Can they put in an offer today?'*
'Our office is just about to close for today, but they can submit a bid tomorrow morning.'
- *'Can our children use this playground?'*
'No, I'm sorry. It's only for use by children at the nursery school.'
- *'Can dogs be let off the lead here?'*
'No. There's a sign over there forbidding it.'



? Language Help

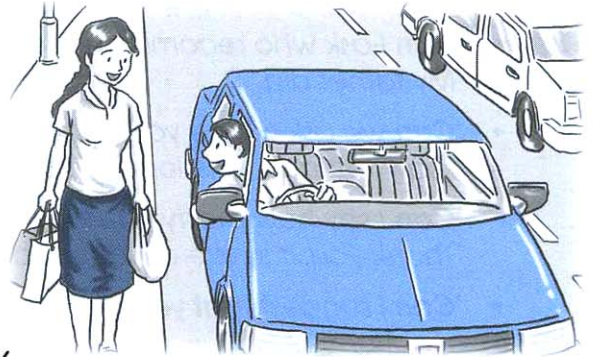
- 1 You can make your request sound more polite or more persuasive by adding **possibly** to the question:
 - *'Can I possibly use your phone? I need to make an urgent call and mine needs to be recharged.'*
'Sure. Here it is.'
 - *'Can my little girl possibly use your toilet?'*
'Certainly. It's just through here.'
- 2 You can also sometimes use **could** in this context, especially when you want to be slightly more polite:
 - *'Could you pass me the salt, please?'*
- 3 It was formerly considered more correct to use **may** rather than **can** or **could** in this context, but **may** is now usually used with this meaning only in formal situations:
 - *'May I see your driving licence, sir?'*
'Certainly. Here it is, officer.'

You sometimes use the contracted negative form **can't** in this context, often when you expect to get a negative answer. You sometimes use it when you want to be more emphatic or persuasive:

- *'Can't we have a table by the window?'*
'No, I'm sorry. All those tables have been reserved for lunch today.'
- *'Can't the children have a ride on the ponies?'*
'I'm sorry. The ponies are not for hire.'
- *'Can't you let us have a quick look at the painting? We've come a long way to see it.'*
'Only if you are very quick. The gallery is about to close.'
- *'Can't we see the other rooms in the castle? My daughter's a historian specializing in this period.'*
'I'm afraid not. The other rooms are for the family's private use.'

6 You can use **can**, followed by **I** or **we**, when you are offering something to someone or offering to do something for them:

- 'I'm going into town this morning. **Can** I give you a lift?'
'Yes, please. That would be marvellous.'
- '**Can** I give you a hand with all those bags? They look heavy.'
'They are! Could you carry these two, please?'
- '**Can** we look after the baby while you carry your shopping in?'
'Yes, please. That would be a great help.'
- 'You look lost. **Can** I help you?'
'Yes, please. I'm trying to find King's Road.'
'It's that street just across the road.'
- '**Can** we offer you a drink?'
'No, thank you. I have to go now.'



? Language Help

It was formerly considered more correct to use **may** rather than **can** in this context, but **may** is now usually used with this meaning only in formal situations:

- 'Good morning, ladies. **May** we offer you a free sample of this wonderful new perfume?'

You can make this offer of help sound more emphatic or persuasive by using **can't** instead of **can**:

- '**Can't** we at least give you a hand with the garden? It's a lot of work for one person.'
'That's very kind of you, but I'm going to employ someone to do most of the work.'
- 'It must be difficult carrying the baby and all those bags upstairs. **Can't** you let me take the bags?'
'That would be a great help, thanks.'

7 You can use **can**, especially with **I** or **we**, in formal contexts to make a comment, suggestion, etc, or ask a question in a polite way, although **can** used in this way is not as polite or formal as **may** or **might**:

- **'Can** I ask who recommended the firm to you?'
'My father did.'
- **'Can** we ask where you heard about the post?'
'I saw the ad in the local paper.'
- **'Can** I say how pretty you look today?'
'Thank you. It's nice of you to say so.'
- **'Can** I suggest that you go for some counselling? You've had a terrible experience.'
'I'd like some information on that, please.'



Language Help

1 Although this is a formal, polite way of making a comment or asking a question, you sometimes use it when you are angry or disapproving and you sometimes use it in rhetorical questions:

- **'Can** I ask what you hope to achieve by acting like this?'
'At the very least, I will be seen to be making a protest.'
- **Can** I ask what on earth you think you're doing?

2 If you wish to be more formal or more polite, you can use **may** or **might** in this context:

- **'May** I ask exactly what you mean by that?'
'I mean that this is all your own fault.'
- **'Might** I ask where you intend to get the money from for this trip?'
'I was hoping you might lend it to me.'
'I certainly will not. You'll have to work for it.'

8 You use **can** in a question which expresses doubt, disbelief or surprise:

- *'Can Sue really have been responsible for the thefts?'*
'I wouldn't have thought so, but the police have evidence against her.'
- *'Bill says he's considering closing the city office.'*
'Can he be seriously contemplating such a thing? That's bound to affect sales badly.'
'He says we just can't afford to keep it open any longer.'
- *'Mike's secretary says that he dismissed her unfairly.'*
'Can she be telling the truth?'
'I doubt it, but the matter will have to be investigated.'

9 You sometimes use **can't** when making a suggestion:

- *'I can't come to the party unless I can find a babysitter?'*
'Can't you take the baby with you? The party's in the afternoon and other people are taking their children.'
- *'Jim won't be able to come to the meeting. His car is being repaired.'*
'Can't he take the bus? That's how I'm getting there.'
- *'I'm having difficulty in finding accommodation in York for Jane's wedding.'*
'Can't you stay with your sister? I thought she lived there.'
'She does, but she's already putting up most of the family and there's no room for me.'
- *'I need to stay in this evening to finish my essay.'*
'Can't you finish it tomorrow?'
'No. I have to hand it in tomorrow morning.'



Language Help

You can also use **couldn't** in this context:

- *'I'm going to have to take the bus tomorrow. My car's in the garage being repaired?'*
'Couldn't you ask Tom for a lift? He lives in the next street.'
'That's an idea. I'll ask him.'
- *'Couldn't we stay a few more days? It's so lovely here and we've another week off work.'*
'Good idea! We have to move out of the cottage, but I'll see if the hotel has any rooms available.'

can I have/can I get?

You can use **can I have?** or **can I get?** in an informal context when you are asking for someone, sometimes in a shop:

- *'Can I have a packet of those biscuits, please?'*
'Certainly. That will be \$4.00, please.'
- *'Can I get three of those small cream cakes, please?'*
'Certainly. Would you like anything else?'
- *'Mum, can I have a piece of chocolate, please?'*
'You can have a piece after lunch.'

can I help you?

Sales assistants often say **can I help you?** when they want to know if you want to buy anything, try anything on, etc:

- *'Can I help you, sir?'*
'Yes. I'd like that blue striped tie, please.'
- *'Can I help you?'*
'Yes, thank you. I'd like to try on these two skirts.'

Language Help ?

A more polite form of this is **may I help you?**

Could

How to use it

1 You use **could** to ask if someone had the ability, skill or knowledge to do something in the past:

- *'Could your grandparents speak Italian?'*
'My mother's parents could. In fact, they were both born in Italy.'
- *'Could people work past the official retirement age then?'*
'No. Everyone had to retire at 65.'
- *'Could Jim really play the piano when he was three?'*

- **'Could** Jim really play the piano when he was three?'
'His mother says he could.'
- **'Could** Jane read before she went to school?'
'Oh, yes. Her mother taught her.'
- **'Could** grandmother drive?'
'Yes, she could, although it wasn't very common for women to drive in those days.'

Language Help

In more formal contexts you can use **was ... able to ...**, etc instead of **could** in this context:

- **'Was** the child **able** to escape?'
'Yes. She managed to break the bathroom window and climb out.'
- **'Were** the children **able** to talk?'
'No. They were too young.'
- **'Wasn't** the man **able** to sign his name?'
'No. He just made a cross.'

You can use the negative contracted form **couldn't** in this context in informal situations, often when you are expecting a negative answer. Sometimes you are showing annoyance or exasperation. In more formal contexts you can use the longer form **could not**:

- **'Couldn't** the late prisoner read and write?'
'No. Unfortunately, he was completely illiterate.'
- **'Couldn't** she go on living in the house after her husband died?'
'No, she was too frail to look after herself.'
- **'Could** our government **not** have done more to save the hostages? They died such a horrible death.'
'We were all angry about what happened to the hostages, but there was nothing the government could do to prevent the rebels slaughtering them.'

- **'Couldn't** they have repaired my old computer if they tried hard enough? I can't afford to buy a new one.'
'No. It's an old machine and technology moves on very rapidly these days.'
- **'Couldn't** the witness to my son's attack identify the attacker?'
'I'm afraid not. She failed to identify anyone in the identity parade.'

2 You can use **could** to ask if someone was aware of something through their senses in the past:

- **'Could** she have seen someone in the garden of the house from the distance?'
'Yes, if she had reasonably good eyesight.'
- **'Could** the old man see well enough to drive at that age?'
'Yes. He had excellent eyesight.'
- **'Could** the coma victim hear what was going around her?'
'Doctors say that she might well have done so.'
- **'Could** the dying woman feel any pain?'
'No. She was given morphine towards the end.'

You can use the contracted negative form **couldn't** in this context in informal situations, often when you are expecting a negative answer. Sometimes you are showing annoyance or exasperation. In more formal contexts you use **could not**:

- **'Couldn't** the old man smell the gas?'
'Apparently, he had a very poor sense of smell and wouldn't have realized that he had left the cooker on.'
- **'Couldn't** the next-door neighbours hear the child screaming? They could have saved his life.'
'They say they didn't hear anything and these old houses do have very thick walls.'
- **'Couldn't** the driver see the lorry coming towards him?'
'We don't know, but there was nothing he could have done to avoid the accident, even if he had seen it.'

3 You can use **could** to ask if it is possible for something to happen or for someone to do something in the past. This use is sometimes considered to be slightly more polite or more formal than using **can**:

- *'Could you drive my children with yours to school tomorrow, please, Tom?'*
'Yes. I can do that easily, Jill.'
- *'Could we rearrange the meeting for sometime tomorrow, Ms Black?'*
'Not really, Mr Jones. Many of the shareholders have come to the city just for today.'
- *'Could I get the book anywhere else in the town?'*
'No, I'm afraid not. This is the only bookshop.'
- *'Could he get a visa from the consulate?'*
'He could, but it will take a few days.'

Language Help ?

You can also use **can** in this context. It is sometimes considered to be slightly less polite or less formal than **could**:

- *'Can I buy this picture?'*
'I'm afraid not. That one has already been sold.'

4 You can use **could** with **have** to ask if something was possible or likely in the past:

- *'Could Jane and Bob have gone away together?'*
'It seems possible, but no one knows yet. Neither of them left any message for their families.'
- *'Could anyone have got hold of the password?'*
'It would have been almost impossible, I would say.'
- *'Could the safe have been destroyed in the fire?'*
'No. Police say it must have been removed before the fire started.'
- *'Could the fire have been started deliberately?'*
'Yes. Police are almost certain that it was a case of arson.'
- *'Could Jim have helped to carry out the robbery?'*

Language Help ?

You can also use **might** with **have** in this way:

- *'Might Sue have known that she was terminally ill before she consulted a doctor?'*
'She probably did. She was a nurse, after all.'

'I wouldn't have thought so. He's such an honest person.'

- *'Could they have saved her life if she had contacted a doctor sooner?'*
'Possibly, but only if she had sought medical help at least a year ago.'

5 You use **could**, usually with the pronoun **you**, to ask someone to help you in some way or to do something for you:

- *'Could you help me carry this table upstairs, please, John.'*
'Sure, Bill.'
- *'Could you lend me these books, please? I'll give them back to you tomorrow.'*
'Of course, you can. Keep them as long as you like.'
- *'Could you hold the door open for me, please?'*
'Certainly. Do you need a hand with the baby's pushchair?'
'No, thanks very much. I'll manage.'
- *'Could you lend me some coffee? I've run out and I've got some people coming to dinner?'*
'Of course. I have a spare packet. I'll get it for you.'

Language Help ?

You can also use **can** in this context. It is sometimes considered to be slightly less polite or less formal than **could**:

- *'Can you lend me today's newspaper? There's an article in it that I want to read.'*
'Sure. Take it with you. I've finished with it.'

6 You use **could** with **I** and **we** when you are asking permission to do something. You can also use **could** with **he**, **she** or **they** or with noun phrases when you are asking permission on behalf of someone else:

- *'Could we have the heating on? It's very cold in here.'*
'Of course. I'll just switch it on.'
- *'I missed yesterday's lecture. Could I borrow your notes?'*
'Sure. I'll get them for you.'
- *'Could I park here? I won't be a minute.'*
'Only if you're very quick. It's the gateway to an office car park.'
- *'Could we bring the children into the pub if we have a meal?'*
'No. I'm afraid children are not allowed in the pub at all.'

- *'Could we borrow these books?'*
'No, sorry. These are reference books. You can't take them away from the library.'
- *'Could the children try on these shorts, please?'*
'Yes, certainly. The fitting rooms are over there.'
- *'The dress my daughter bought yesterday is too big. Could she change it for a smaller size?'*
'Yes, of course, as long as she has the receipt.'

Language Help

- 1 You can use **can** instead of **could** in this context, although using **could** is sometimes considered to be slightly more polite or formal than using **can**:
 - *'Can I have a loan of a pen, Jim?'*
'Sure. Here's one.'
 - *'Can I close the door? There's a lot of noise going on out there.'*
'Close it if you like, but it's hot in here with it closed.'
- 2 You can make your request sound more polite or more persuasive by adding **possibly** to the question:
 - *'Could I possibly use your computer? Mine has broken down and I want to book a holiday online.'*
'Sure. Go ahead.'
 - *'Could we possibly have a look at a history of the town please?'*
'Yes, of course. We have these two. You can look at them over there.'
- 3 It was formerly considered that it was more correct to use **may** rather than **could** or **can** in this context, but **may** is now usually used with this meaning only in formal situations:

- *'May I see your driving licence, sir?'
'Certainly. Here it is, officer.'*
- *'May I have your signed copy of the contract, sir?'
'Of course. This is it.'*



7 You sometimes use **couldn't** when making a suggestion:

- *'Couldn't you give Tom another chance?'
'I've given him several chances already and he hasn't improved. I'm telling him to go this time.'*
- *'Couldn't we book a room in that hotel on the main street? It wasn't very expensive and it was very comfortable.'
'That's a good idea. I'll ring them now.'*
- *'Couldn't you borrow the money for your trip from your parents?'
'No, they couldn't afford it.'*

? *Language Help*

You can also use **can't** in this way:

- *'Can't we go by plane?'
'No. There's no airport there.'*

Planning a French trip

- Jane It's a pity you won't be at the meeting this evening. **Can't** your mum look after the children for you?
- Jill No. Mum goes to an evening class on Tuesdays. She's studying French.
- Jane **Can't** your mum speak French? She always used to take you to France on holiday when you were little.
- Jill She can speak it a bit, but she wants to learn to speak it fluently. She's planning to rent a house in France for a couple of months in the summer. I'm really going to miss her while she's away.
- Jane **Couldn't** you and the children go with her?
- Jill We're going to go for a short time, but I can't take all that time off work.
- Jane You write for a living and you work freelance. **Couldn't** you just as easily work in France? You might get some good ideas for articles. I sometimes work for a travel magazine and the editor's always looking for interesting foreign stuff.
- Jill **Could** you give me the name and phone number?
- Jane I don't have the details on me. I'll phone you later and give you them.
- Jill **Could** you **possibly** email them to me?
- Jane Sure. I'll do that.

An accident on the ice

Bill That was a nasty fall, Gran. **Can** you get up? I'll give you a hand.

Gran I can't stand on this leg, Bill. My ankle's very painful. **Could** I have broken it?

Bill I'm not sure. **Can** you move it at all?

Gran No, it's much too sore.

Bill It sounds as though it might be broken. I'm going to get you to the hospital. I'll ring for an ambulance on my mobile. Hello, **could** you send an ambulance to the front gates of Greenside Park? My grandmother's had a nasty accident on the ice and might have broken her ankle.

Gran Thanks, Bill. **Could** you help me over to that bench? I'll try to hop. Will the ambulance be here soon?

Bill They say it'll be about half-an-hour.

Gran **Can't** they get here any sooner?

Bill I'm afraid not. Apparently, most of the ambulances have gone to a bad road accident. **Can** I get you anything? There's a kiosk just over there.

Gran I'd love a bottle of water.

Bill I'll just go and get you one.

Unit 2

MAY AND MIGHT

May

How to use it

- 1 You can use **may** to ask if something relating to the present or future is likely or possible, but only in formal contexts:
 - *'May we hope for an improvement in the patient's condition?'*
'Only if the antibiotics are effective and that is not at all certain.'
 - *'May there still be some funding available for such projects?'*
'I think there may be, but there is a great deal of demand for them.'



Language Help

- 1 It is more common to use **might** in this context. **May** is considered more formal:
 - *'Might we still get a grant for the project?'*
'I doubt it very much. I'm sure we would have heard by now.'
 - *'Might the accident victim make a full recovery?'*
'It's remotely possible, but the doctors are not optimistic.'
- 2 In less formal situations you can use **can** in this context:
 - *'Can things improve without a larger budget?'*
'It's difficult to see how.'
- 3 You can also use **could**:
 - *'Could the patient still recover his speech?'*
'It's doubtful after all this time?'

2 You can use **may** with **I** and **we** when you are asking permission to do something. You can also use **may** with **he, she** or **they** or with noun phrases when you are asking permission on behalf of someone else. However, although it was formerly considered more correct to use **may** rather than **can** or **could** in this context, **may** is now only used in formal situations:

- *'May I add a few comments to what has been said?'*
'Certainly. Go ahead.'
- *'May we have a look round the castle?'*
'No, I'm sorry. It's not open to the public.'
- *'May the patients sit here until the ambulance arrives to take them home, doctor? The waiting room is full.'*
'Of course, nurse.'
- *'May my clients leave their bags here until they leave for the airport?'*
'Of course. We have a luggage room in the basement.'
- *'May I take up a few minutes of your time to tell you about the aims of our organization?'*
'No, I'm sorry. I'm in a hurry.'
- *'May I use your telephone? I need to make an urgent call and my mobile is broken.'*
'Certainly. The phone's in the hall.'

Language Help

1 You can also use **might** in this context:

- *'Might I sit with you? All the other seats are taken.'*
'Certainly. Do sit down.'

2 You can use **can** in this context in less formal situations:

- *'Can I have a look at your newspaper, please? I want to see what's on at the cinema?'*
'Sure. Here it is.'

3 You can also use **could** in this context in less formal situations:

- *'Could I have this cup of coffee?'*
'Yes, go ahead. I poured it for Jim, but he doesn't want it.'

3 You can use **may**, followed by **I** or **we**, when you are offering to help someone or to do something for them. This use of **may** was formerly considered to be more correct than the use of **can** or **could** in this context, but **may** is now used only in formal situations:

- *'May I offer you a lift? I'm going your way.'*
'That's very kind of you, but I have my car in the car park.'
- *'May I help you wash up?'*
'No, thank you. I'll just put all the dishes in the dishwasher.'
- *'May I do anything to make your stay here more comfortable?'*
'No, thank you. We have everything we need and we're very comfortable.'
- *'You don't look very well. May we offer you some assistance?'*
'Thank you. Could you get me a drink of water, please?'

Language Help

1 You can also use **can** in this context in less formal situations:

- *'Can I get you anything? Some coffee or a glass of wine?'*

2 You can also sometimes use **might** in this context:

- *'Has your car broken down? Might I be of any assistance?'*
'It's very kind of you to offer, but the local garage has sent a mechanic to help. I'm just waiting for him.'

4 You can use **may**, especially with **I** or **we**, in formal contexts to make a comment, suggestion, etc, or to ask a question in a very polite way:

- *'May I say how pretty you look in that dress?'*
'Thank you. It's kind of you to say so.'
- *'May I suggest that we postpone making our application until further information is available?'*
'The problem is that the deadline for applications is next week.'

- **'May** I ask how you came by this information?'
'I'm afraid that I cannot reveal my sources.'
- **'May** I make a suggestion? I think that we should ask our financial director to have another look at the budget for this project.'
'That's an excellent suggestion. I'll contact him now.'

Although this is a formal, polite way of making a comment or asking a question, you sometimes use it when you are angry or disapproving and you sometimes use it in rhetorical questions:

- **'May** I ask what right you have to be here? You are not a club member.'
'I didn't realize it was a private club.'
- **'May** we ask where the money's coming from for your trip?'
'I was hoping that you might lend it to me.'
'I'm sorry, Jim. We simply can't afford to do that.'
- **May** I ask what you think you are doing? This is private property.



Language Help

1 You can also use **might** in both of the above contexts:

- **'Might** I propose that we ask John Allen if he would be willing to be a non-executive director of the firm?'
'We should put that proposal to the board at the next meeting.'
- **'Might** I ask what you're doing in my back garden, young man?'
'Your daughter asked to me to give you an estimate for some gardening work.'
'I'm so sorry. I thought you were an intruder.'

2 You can also use **can** and **could** in both of the above contexts, but in less formal situations than **may** and **might**:

- **'Can** I say that I think we should get out of this market right now?'
'That's easier said than done. We've invested a lot of money in it.'

- **'Can** I ask where you think you're going? This is private property!
'I'm sorry. I thought the house was open to the public.'
'Not this part.'
- **'Could** I just say that I am ashamed of what I've done?
'Don't worry. You were ill at the time.'
- **'Could** I enquire where you got that watch?
'I found it lying in the car park.'
'That's funny. It's mine and I left it lying on my desk when I went out at lunch time.'

may I/we come in?

You say **may I/we come in?** as a polite way of asking if you can enter someone's house:



- 'We're a police officers, Mrs Brown. **May we come in?**
'What's all this about?'
'I'm afraid we have some bad news for you.'
- 'Good morning. We're from the fire service and we're going round the area advising people on fire prevention. **May we come in?**
'Certainly. Do come through.'
- 'Good afternoon. I'm conducting some market research on kitchen equipment. **May I come in?**
'No. I'm sorry. I'm just going out.'

may I help you?

Sales assistants often say **may I help you?** when they want to know if you want to buy anything, try anything on, etc. This is a more polite form of **can I help you?**:

- *'May I help you, madam?'*
'Yes, please. I'm looking for a plain black dress in a size 14.'
- *'May I help you, sir?'*
'I'm looking for a bracelet for my wife. Could you show me that one over there, please?'

Might

How to use it

1 You can use **might** in more formal contexts, to ask if something relating to the present or future is likely or possible:

- *'Might it be an edible mushroom?'*
'It might be, but it looks like a toadstool to me.'
- *'Might his ankle be broken?'*
'It's unlikely, but we'll get it X-rayed, just in case.'
- *'Might the boss have to declare some redundancies?'*
'I'm afraid it's highly possible if sales don't improve.'
- *'Might Jane rent Tom's flat?'*
'She's thinking about it, but the rent's a bit expensive for her.'
- *'Might the witness be lying?'*
'He may well be, but the defence will have to prove that.'

You can use the contracted negative form of **might** to ask questions in this context, often when you are expecting a negative answer. In more formal situations you can use the longer form **might not**:

- *'Might we not still get an award?'*
'Not this year. The awards have already been announced.'

- *'Mightn't Jack still go to university?'*
'It's not very likely. He's got a job as a trainee journalist.'
- *'Mightn't Mary's accusation be true?'*
'Definitely not! The man she's accused has never met her and has never been to this town.'

2 You can use **might** with **have** to ask if something was possible or likely in the past:

- *'Might the accident have been prevented?'*
'Yes. I'm afraid it could have been, if the workers had observed the safety guidelines.'
- *'Might Jane have been unaware of his violent streak?'*
'I don't see how she could have been. She was married to him for ten years.'
- *'Might the police have charged the wrong man?'*
'It certainly looks that way, because the case has been reopened.'
- *'Might we have made a mistake in sacking him?'*
'No. I'm sure we did the right thing. He was lazy and dishonest.'
- *'Might more people have voted if it had been a dry day?'*
'Oh, yes. It's a well-known fact that a wet day keeps some voters away.'

You can use **mightn't**, the contracted form of the negative of **might**, to ask questions in this context, often when you are expecting a negative answer, although this is not very common. In more formal situations you can use the longer form **might not**:

- *'Might it not have been more efficient to interview some of the candidates all together?'*
'It certainly would have taken up considerably less time.'
- *'Mightn't it have been cheaper for John to have gone by train?'*
'Apparently not. He got a really cheap flight with a budget airline.'

3 You can use **might**, followed by **I** or **we**, when you are offering to help someone or to do something for them:

- *'Might I help you with your luggage? That suitcase looks heavy.'*
'Thank you very much, young man. It is heavy and I'm not as strong as I was.'

- *'Might we give you a lift into town and you can contact a garage there?'*
'That's kind of you, but I'd rather stay with my car, thank you. I've phoned the AA and they said they wouldn't be long.'
- *'Might I get your luggage down from the rack for you?'*
'Yes, please. I'm not quite tall enough to reach it.'

4 You can use **might** with **I** and **we** when you are making a request or asking permission to do something. You can also use **might** with **he**, **she** or **they** or with noun phrases when you are asking permission on behalf of someone else. However, although it was formerly considered more correct to use **might** rather than **can** or **could** in this context, **might** is now only used in more formal contexts:

- *'Might I have another piece of cake?'*
'Certainly. Help yourself.'
- *'Might we join you? There are no empty tables.'*
'Of course. Do sit down.'
- *'Might I have a look round the property today?'*
'No, I'm afraid not, sir. Viewing starts tomorrow.'
- *'Might the children play in your garden a little longer? They're enjoying themselves so much!'*
'Yes, of course. It's good to see them so happy!'
- *'Might we have the room for an extra night? We haven't finished exploring the city.'*
'I'm afraid no, sir. We are fully booked for the rest of this week.'
- *'Might our students have a look at the original documents?'*
'No. I'm afraid they will only be able to see copies.'
- *'Mightn't we have that table over there?'*
'No, I'm sorry. That table's reserved.'
- *'Mightn't our clients be accommodated in the main part of the hotel?'*
'Unfortunately, only the chalets are available at that time.'



Language Help

1 You can also use **may** in this context:

- *'May I use your computer? I need to send an urgent email.'*
'Certainly.'

2 This use of **may** and **might** was formerly considered to be more correct than the use of **can** or **could** in this context, but **can** and **could** are now more common:

- *'Can we have breakfast slightly earlier. We have an early plane to catch?'*
'Yes, of course. What time would you like it?'
- *'Could I borrow this book for a few days?'*
'I'm sorry. I need it for my essay.'

5 You can use **might**, especially with **I** or **we**, in formal contexts to make a comment, suggestion, etc, or ask a question in a very polite way:

- *'Might I enquire how much all this is going to cost? It sounds a very expensive project.'*
'We have yet to finalize the actual figures, but the cost will be well within our budget.'
- *'Might I point out, chairman, that this meeting should have finished half-an-hour ago?'*
'I am quite aware of that, Mrs Brown, but we have a particularly long agenda today.'
- *'Might I propose that we postpone our decision on this project until we have seen the final costs?'*
'Let's vote on that suggestion.'



Language Help

Although this is a formal, polite way of making a comment or asking a question, you sometimes use it when you are angry or disapproving and you sometimes use it in rhetorical questions:

- *'Might I enquire how much all this is going to cost? It sounds a very expensive project to me.'*
'We have yet to finalize the actual figures, but the cost will be well within our budget.'
- *'Might I remind you that you have no right to be at this meeting?'*

'I am here to represent the interest of my mother.'

- **Might** *I ask what you think you're doing?*

Language Help

1 You can use **may** in both of the above contexts, but **might** is considered to be more formal or polite:

- **'May** *I suggest that we phone for a taxi? We've probably missed the last bus.'*
'That's an excellent idea. It shouldn't be too expensive if the four of us share it.'
- **'May** *I enquire how you got in here? You should have been stopped by security.'*
'There was no one on the door when I came in.'

2 You can also use **can** and **could** in both of the above contexts, but **may** and **might** are used in more formal situations:

- **'Can** *I say how fantastic you look in that dress?'*
'Thank you.'
- **'Can** *I say that you have a real nerve turning up here?'*
'I've come to see my children.'
- **'Could** *I suggest that we all calm down and go for a drink?'*
'Good idea! Let's go.'
- **'Could** *I ask where you got to last night?'*
'I'm sorry I didn't come to the party. I wasn't feeling very well.'

Crime prevention

- Policeman Good morning, Mrs Brown.
- Mrs Brown Good morning, officer. **Might** I ask why you are here?
- Policeman We're going round the area giving people advice on crime prevention. **May** I come in for a few minutes, please?
- Mrs Brown Certainly. **May** I offer you some coffee?
- Policeman Yes, please, Mrs Brown. **May** I have it black?
- Mrs Brown There's your coffee. Now you can tell me what all this is about.
- Policeman We want to advise you on how to make your house as secure as possible. **Might** I start by having a look at all your door locks and windows?
- Mrs Brown Certainly, but my nephew put new locks on them all and installed an alarm system after an attempted burglary two years ago.
- Policeman They certainly all look very secure. **Might** I ask how the burglary was prevented?
- Mrs Brown I was upstairs and I heard my dog barking furiously. I ran downstairs and saw a young man running away. He had broken a window, but he must have heard me coming and made a run for it.
- Policeman **Mightn't** the dog have frightened him off? A dog's often better than an alarm system as a burglar deterrent.

An injured knee

- Jim** **Might** I still be able to play football next Saturday, doctor?
- Doctor** We'll have to wait and see, Jim. You've had a nasty injury to your knee in today's match.
- Jim** **Might** I be able to play if I get some physiotherapy? That usually works quite quickly.
- Doctor** It sometimes does. It depends on the nature of the injury. I think you may have to rest your knee for a while.
- Jim** **Might** I have to give up football for the rest of the season? I couldn't bear that.
- Doctor** I think if you rest it as much as possible for a week or so, your knee will be fine. Then you'll be able to get back on the football pitch. **May** I say how much I enjoyed today's match and **may** I also say how well you played?
- Jim** Thanks, doctor. I love football. **Might** you come and see some other matches this season?
- Doctor** I may well be at all of them. I was a professional footballer before I became a doctor and the school has asked me to help with the football coaching.
- Jim** **Might** you accept?
- Doctor** I'm certainly thinking about it, Jim.

Unit 3

WILL AND WOULD

Will

How to use it

1 **Will** is used to ask questions referring to the future, especially questions which ask if something is possible or likely. It was formerly considered incorrect to use **will** with **I** or **we**. Instead, **shall** was considered correct in this context. Nowadays, the use of **will** with **I** and **we** is considered quite acceptable and correct:

- *'Will Jim be all right, doctor?'*
'It's really too soon to tell. He's very ill.'
- *'Will I be able to play football next weekend?'*
'It depends on how well your ankle heals.'
- *'Will we get there before nightfall?'*
'We should do, unless the traffic's very heavy.'
- *'Will the building work be finished in time for the official opening?'*
'I very much hope so. The builders are only slightly behind schedule at the moment.'
- *'Will the new principal start work this term?'*
'No. He won't be able to take up the post until the start of next term.'
- *'Will you be able to continue working after the baby is born?'*
'Yes. I'm going to work part-time and my mother is going to look after the baby.'
- *'Will Jack be home soon?'*
'Yes. He's usually back by six.'



You can use **won't**, the contracted form of **will not**, to ask questions in this context, often when you are expecting a negative answer. You can also use the longer form, but in more formal situations:

- *'Won't I be able to go home this afternoon?'*
'No. You'll have to stay in hospital overnight.'
- *'Won't Jack be driving us to the airport?'*
'No. Jack's had to go to work. I've ordered a taxi.'
- *'Won't Sue get here tonight?'*
'No. It'll be tomorrow morning before she gets here. It's a very long flight from Australia.'
- *'Will Liz not regret her decision not to have children?'*
'She says that she is absolutely certain that she will have no regrets.'



Language Help

1 You can sometimes use **is ... going to ...?** etc instead of **will** with this meaning:

- *'Is the building work **going to** be finished on time for the official opening?'*
'The builders say that it will.'
- *'Is Jim **going to** be all right, doctor?'*
'It's really too soon to tell. He's very ill.'
- *'Are the hostages **going to** be all right?'*
'We hope so, but we can't be sure at this stage.'

2 You can use **will** with the pronoun **you** to make a request or ask someone to do something for you:

- *'Will you take the dog for a walk? I've got a very sore leg.'*
'Yes, I'll do that. I need some exercise, anyway.'
- *'Will you look after the children tomorrow evening, please, Mum? We're going to a party.'*
'Of course. What time are you going out?'
- *'If you're going to the library, will you please take this book back for me?'*

'Certainly. I'm going this afternoon.'

- *'Will you give me a hand with these bags? They're very heavy.'*
'Sure. I'll take these.'
- *'Will you keep an eye on the house for us while we're on holiday?'*
'Of course and I'll water your plants, if you like.'
- *'Set the table, will you, Jim? Dinner is nearly ready.'*
'Sure.'
- *'Let the cat in, will you? It's scratching at the door.'*
'Sure.'

Sometimes requests using **will** are more like orders, and are often given rather angrily:

- *'Will you shut that door? I'm freezing.'*
'Sorry. I'm just coming in.'
- *'Will you turn that music down? It's far too loud.'*
'This kind of music's meant to be loud.'
- *Will you be quiet? You're not getting any sweets.*



Language Help

- 1 You can use **would** instead of **will** either in requests or orders. Using **would** is considered to be slightly more polite than using **will**:
 - *'Would you help me carry this wood round to the back garden?'*
'OK. Let's get started.'
 - *'Would you come here this minute? You still have to finish your homework.'*
'Coming, Mum.'
- 2 Sometimes the punctuation mark following these orders is an exclamation mark rather than a question mark.

2 You use **will** with **you** to offer something to someone or to invite them to do something:

- *'Will you stay and have dinner with us?'*
'I'd love to, but I have to go home now.'
- *'Will you have some tea?'*
'Yes, please. I take a little milk, but no sugar.'
- *'We're just about to have a drink. Will you join us?'*
'That would be very nice, thank you.'
- *We're going to the cinema this evening. Will you come with us?*
- *'Will you take a seat? The doctor will see you shortly.'*
'Thank you.'

You can also use **won't**, the contracted form of **will not**, with **you** with the same meaning, especially when you are trying to be more emphatic or persuasive. **Won't** is often considered to be more polite than **will** in this context. You can use the longer form **will not** in more formal situations:

- *'Won't you have some coffee? I'm just about to make some.'*
'Thank you. That would be nice.'
- *'Won't you stay the night? It's very late and we have a spare room.'*
'That's kind of you, but I really must get home tonight.'
- *'Won't you have some more cheese?'*
'No, thank you. I've eaten too much already.'
- *'We've rented a villa in southern Spain for a couple of weeks next month. Won't you come and stay for a bit?'*
- *'Will you not join the family firm? Your father would be so pleased.'*
'No, I'm sorry I can't. I'm not at all interested in textiles and I really want to study science at university.'



Language Help

1 You can also use **would you like ...?** or **would you like to ...?** with this meaning:

- *'Would you like a coffee?'*
'I'd love one, thank you.'

- 'We're taking the children to the zoo today. **Would you like to** come with us?'
'Yes, I would. Thanks for asking me.'

See **would you like ...?** under **would** below.

2 In informal contexts you can sometimes omit the verb and pronoun:

- '**Some coffee?**'
'Yes, please. I'd love some.'
- '**Another sandwich?**'
'No, thank you.'
- '**Tea?**'
'Yes, please. No sugar, thanks.'
- '**A glass of wine?**'
'No, thank you. I'd love one, but I'm driving.'

will you please ...?

You sometimes use **will you please ...?** when you are asking someone in an angry or rude way to do something or to stop doing something. The question is sometimes rhetorical:

- '**Will you please** turn that TV down? It's far too loud.'
'Sorry. Pass me the remote control, please.'
- '**Will you please** stop playing that video game and get some studying done? Your exams start next week.'
'I was just having a break, Mum. I'll get back to work now.'
- **Will you please** get a move on? We're going to be late.

will that be all?

Sales assistants say **will that be all?** when they want to know if you want to buy something else as well as what you have already asked for:

- 'That's one chicken and a kilo of steak mince. **Will that be all?**'
'Yes, thank you. How much is that?'

- 'That's a kilo of green grapes and a large pineapple. **Will that be all**, Mrs Brown?'
'I'd like half a kilo of bananas as well, please, and a kilo of tomatoes.'
'Certainly. I'll just get them for you.'

will there be anything else?

Sales assistants sometimes use this phrase instead of **will that be all?**:



- 'That's one large pineapple. **Will there be anything else** today?'
'No, thank you. That's all.'
- 'There are your eggs, Mr Brown. **Will there be anything else?**'
'Yes, please. A carton of orange juice.'

Language Help

An alternative to this is **would you like anything else?**:

- 'There's your milk and butter, Mrs Brown. **Would you like anything else?**'
'Yes. I'd like half-a-dozen eggs, please.'

In informal contexts shop assistants sometimes omit the verb and pronoun:

- '**Anything else** today, Mr Jones?'
'No, thanks, That's all.'

Would

How to use it

1 You use **would** when you are asking if something is possible or likely:

- *'Would you recognize your attacker?'*
'No. I was attacked from behind. I didn't even get to look at my attacker.'
- *'Would he ever forgive you?'*
'He says that he never will.'
- *'Would you consider applying for the job?'*
'No. My qualifications aren't good enough.'
- *'Would Jim agree to give the after-dinner speech?'*
'I shouldn't think so. He hates public speaking.'
- *'Would this dress fit little Sue?'*
'I think it would be a little too small.'
- *'Would the prisoner understand what the policeman is saying? She doesn't speak English very well.'*
'The police have been asked to provide an interpreter.'
- *'Would your father like this tie?'*
'It's a bit bright for him. I think he'd prefer this one.'

You can also use **wouldn't**, the contracted form of **would not**, in questions in this context, often when you are expecting a negative answer. You can use the longer form **would not** in more formal situations:

- *'Wouldn't you even consider accepting the job?'*
'Absolutely not. I'm perfectly happy in my present place.'
- *'Wouldn't the seller accept that price?'*
'No. He wants several thousands more.'
- *'Would he not agree to a renewal of our contract?'*
'No. He has absolutely refused to do so.'

2 You also use **would** to ask a question about possible action in relation to some situations which might not or does not exist:

- *'Would you buy that car if you had the money?'*
'No. It's far too big for me.'
- *'Would you accept a loan from your parents if they offered it to you?'*
'No. I've graduated now and I want to be independent.'
- *'If Bob asked you to marry him, would you accept?'*
'Yes, but he won't. He doesn't really believe in marriage.'
- *'If he knew the true circumstances of the matter, would he forgive you?'*
'I don't think so and, in any case, he wouldn't let me explain.'
- *'Would you go by plane if it was cheaper than going by train?'*
'Absolutely not! I have a phobia about flying.'
- *'Would she go on seeing him if they were still living in the same town?'*
'I'm really not sure.'

You can use **wouldn't**, the contracted form of **would not**, in questions in this context, often when you are expecting a negative answer. You can use the longer form **would not** in more formal situations:

- *'Wouldn't he go on working there if he could?'*
'No. He had decided to leave long before he was declared redundant.'
- *'Wouldn't you rent that flat if you could afford it?'*
'No. It's too far from the city centre for my liking.'
- *'Wouldn't you know your cousin if you met him again?'*
'I shouldn't think so. I haven't seen him since we were children.'
- *'Wouldn't Liz reconsider her resignation if you offered her a salary increase?'*
'No. She's leaving to go to a much better paid job.'
- *'Would the police not believe Joe if he had an alibi for the time of the offence?'*
'I don't think they'd believe the alibi. They've got CCTV footage of him committing the crime.'
- *'Would you not consider giving him another chance?'*
'Absolutely not! He was having an affair with another woman and that was the end of our relationship, as far as I'm concerned.'

3 You use **would have** to ask if there was a possibility that something might have happened in relation to some situation, event or action in the past that did not occur:

- *'Would a safety helmet have prevented his injuries?'*
'It certainly would have made his head injuries less severe.'
- *'Would an earlier diagnosis have saved her life?'*
'It's possible, but by no means certain. She had a very aggressive form of cancer.'
- *'Would an offer of more money have made any difference to your decision to leave?'*
'No. I was very unhappy in that job. I couldn't wait to leave.'
- *'Would Jane have been happy to go to Australia with Bill?'*
'Yes, she would, but he didn't ask her to.'

You can use the contracted negative from **wouldn't have** in this context, often when you are expecting a negative answer. In a more formal context you can use the longer form **would not have**:

- *'Wouldn't an apology from Jim have been acceptable to Sue?'*
'No, she had decided to leave him before the most recent quarrel.'
- *'Wouldn't a smaller car have been more suitable for Anne's needs?'*
'No. She often takes her three children out and needs a big car to carry all their stuff.'
- *'Wouldn't a more substantial offer have had any effect on your refusal to sell your house to the developer?'*
'Certainly not! I love my house and I don't want to see it converted into flats.'
- *'Would an offer of a directorship not have affected your decision to leave the company?'*
'No. I wanted to start my own company and that is exactly what I did.'

4 You use **would have** to ask a question about what action someone might have taken in relation to some situation or event in the past that did not occur. In this use the main clause is usually followed by a conditional clause:

- *'Would you have taken the job if you had known that it was not going to last very long?'*
'No. I certainly wouldn't.'

- *'Would the police **have** acted on his allegations if they had known he was a convicted criminal?'*
'It's possible. People say that he was very convincing.'
- *'Would the student **have** gone to university if his parents had been able to afford it?'*
'Oh, yes, definitely.'
- *'Would the government **have** gone ahead with the invasion if they had known it would end in civil war?'*
'Who knows?'

You can use the contracted negative form **wouldn't have** in this context, often when you are expecting a negative answer. You can use the longer form **would not have** in more formal situations:

- *'Wouldn't you **have** taken the job if they had offered it to you?'*
'No. It involved too much travelling away from home.'
- *'Wouldn't they **have** taken shelter if they had had warning of the storm?'*
'No. There's no shelter available on that part of the moors.'
- *'Would the firm **not have** made a contribution to Bob's retirement party, if they had been officially asked?'*
'No. It is company policy not to make such contributions.'

5 You use **would** to make a request or ask someone to do something for you. The use of **would** in this context is considered to be more polite than **will**:

- *'Would you hold the door open for me, please? I need both hands to carry this box.'*
'Certainly.'
- *'Would you get me a packet of coffee if you're going to the shops, please? I've run out.'*
'Yes, of course. I know what kind you like?'
- *'Would you give me a lift to the station if you're passing it on the way to work, John?'*
'Sure, Sue. I'll pick you up just after eight.'
- *'Would you come this way, please? The doctor will see you now.'*
'Thank you.'
- *'Would you pass me that pen, please?'*
'Certainly. Here it is.'



- *'Would you do me a favour?'*
'It depends on what it is.'
- *'Answer the phone, would you please, Anne? I'm busy in the kitchen.'*
'OK, Mum.'
- *'Feed the dog, would you, Bill? He's getting under my feet in the kitchen.'*
'Sure. I'll just get his dish.'
- *'Would you tell her that John phoned?'*
'OK.'

Sometimes requests using **would** are more like orders and they are often given rather angrily:

- *'Would you kids keep quiet? I'm trying to concentrate on driving.'*
'Sorry, Dad.'
- *'Would you sit still, Jane? I'm trying to make your hair look nice for the party.'*
'Sorry, Mum.'
- *Would you stop fidgeting and finish your meal, children?*



Language Help

- 1 You can use **will** instead of **would** either in requests or orders. Using **would** is considered to be slightly more polite than using **will**:
 - *'Will you open a window, please? It's very hot in here.'*
'Certainly.'
 - *'Will you switch off that television? It's long past your bedtime.'*
'Sorry, Mum. It was an exciting programme.'
- 2 Sometimes the punctuation mark following these orders is an exclamation mark rather than a question mark.

would you be so kind as to ...?

If you are being exceptionally polite when making a request or asking someone to do something for you, you can use **would you be so kind as to ...?**:

- *'Would you be so kind as to put my luggage on the rack for me? I can't reach it.'*
'Certainly. Is that it there?'
- *'Would you be so kind as to direct us to the High Street? I'm afraid we've got rather lost.'*
'I'm afraid I can't help. I'm a visitor here.'
- *'Would you be so kind as to keep this seat for me? The train's very full and I have to go and say goodbye to my granddaughter.'*
'Of course. Off you go.'

would you care for ...?

This is a formal way of offering something to someone:

- *'Would you care for a drink?'*
'Thank you. I'll just have a soft drink, please.'
- *'Would you care for some coffee?'*
'No, thank you. I've just had some.'



Language Help

- 1 You can omit the modal verb and pronoun in less formal situations:
 - *'Care for a coffee?'*
'I don't have time, thanks.'
 - *'Care for a glass of wine?'*
'No, thanks. I'm driving.'
- 2 A less formal, more usual way of saying the same thing is **would you like ...?:**
 - *'Would you like a chocolate?'*
'No, thanks. I'm on a diet.'

- *'Would you like some more dessert?'*
'No, thank you. It was delicious, but I'm so full!'

would you care to ...?

This is a formal way of asking someone to do something or asking them if they would like to do something:

- *'Would you care to come this way, sir? The doctor will see you now?'*
'Thank you.'
- *'Would you care to take a seat? I'll tell Mr Brown that you're here.'*
'Thank you.'
- *'Would you care to dance?'*
'No, thank you. I've hurt my foot.'

would you kindly ...?

You sometimes use **would you kindly ...?** when you are asking someone to do something in an angry or rude way. The question is sometimes rhetorical:

- *'Would you kindly move your car? It's blocking my driveway.'*
'I'm sorry. I was in a hurry to get to the bank before it closed.'
- *Would you kindly turn that music down? I'm trying to make a phone call.*
- *Would you kindly stop your dog from digging up my lawn?*

Language Help

You can use **kindly** on its own in this context, although, obviously, that is not a question. Doing so is even less polite:

- *Kindly move your car. You're blocking my driveway.*
- *Kindly get out of my way. Can't you see I'm in a hurry?*

See **would you mind** 3 below.

would you like ...?

You use **would you like ...?** when you are offering something to someone:

- *'Would you like some coffee?'*
'I'd love some, thank you.'
- *'Would you like another sandwich?'*
'Yes, please. They're delicious.'
- *'Would you like a slice of chocolate cake?'*
'Yes, please. It looks wonderful.'
- *'Would you like a drink? I'm going to have a gin and tonic.'*
'I'll have the same, please.'



Language Help

You can also use **will** in this context, although this is a little more formal:

- *'Will you have a drink before dinner?'*
'No, thanks. I'll just have some wine with the meal.'
- *'Will you have some dessert?'*
'Yes, please, but just a small portion.'

would you like anything else?

Shop assistants often use this phrase when they want to know if you want to buy something else as well as the things you have already asked for:

- *'Would you like anything else, sir?'*
'No. That's all, thank you.'
- *'There are you cakes, Mrs Blair. Would you like anything else?'*
'Yes. I'd like three cheese scones, please.'

Language Help

An alternative to this is **will there be anything else?**:

- *'There's your milk and butter, Mrs Brown. **Will there be anything else?**'*
'Yes. I'd like half-a-dozen eggs, please.'

In informal contexts shop assistants sometimes omit the verb and pronoun:

- *'**Anything else** today, Mr Jones?'*
'No, thanks. That's all.'

would you like to ...?

You can use **would you like to ...?** when you are inviting someone to do something:

- *'We're planning to take the kids to the seaside tomorrow. **Would you like to join us?**'*
'I'd like to very much, but I have to work.'
- *'I'm going for a walk. **Would you like to come?**'*
'Sure. I'd like some fresh air.'
- *'We're going to the cinema this evening. **Would you like to come along?**'*
'Thanks for asking me, but I'm going out for dinner this evening.'

Language Help

1 You can sometimes omit the modal verb in more informal situations:

- *'We're going for a drink after work. **Join us?**'*
'Thanks. I'd like that.'
- *'I'm going out for some coffee? **Coming?**'*
'I'm sorry. I don't have the time. I need to finish this report.'

2 You can also use **will** in this context, although this is a little more formal than **would you like to**:

- 'We're going to the zoo today? **Will** you come with us?'
'Thanks. I'd love to.'
- 'We're thinking of going to the museum today. **Will** you join us?'
'I'd like to, but I'm going to visit my parents today.'

3 You can also use **would you care to** in this context, although in more formal situations:

- '**Would you care to** have a look round the gallery when it is a little quieter.'
'Yes, I would. That's a good idea.'
- 'I've been asked to a reception at the Town Hall next Friday evening. **Would you care to** accompany me?'
'Yes, thank you. I'd like to very much.'

would you mind ...?

1 You can use **would you mind ...?** when you want to ask someone politely to do something for you:

- '**Would you mind** looking after the children for a few minutes while I collect something from the post office?'
'Sure. On you go.'
- '**Would you mind** keeping an eye on my car while I get some money from the bank machine? Call if you see a traffic warden coming.'
'OK, but be quick. I'm in a hurry.'
- '**Would you mind** keeping a seat for me while I go and order my food?'
'I'll keep this one for you. It's so busy today.'

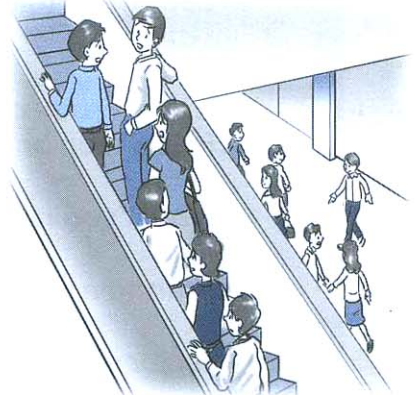
2 You can also use **would you mind ...?** when you want to ask someone's permission politely:

- '**Would you mind** if I opened a window? It's very stuffy in here.'
'No. That's fine by me.'

- *'Would you mind if I park my car outside your house while I get a bus into town?'*
'Go ahead. There's plenty of space. Mine is parked in the driveway.'
- *'Would you mind if I wait here until my husband comes to collect me?'*
'That's OK, but you'd be more comfortable in the waiting room. It's just over there.'

3 You can also use **would you mind ...?** when you want to ask or tell someone something angrily or rudely. The question is sometimes rhetorical:

- *'Would you mind switching that radio off? You're disturbing the neighbours.'*
'Sorry, Mum. I'll take it inside.'
- *'Would you mind not using that mobile in here. The other customers are complaining.'*
'Sorry. It was an emergency call.'
- *Would you mind getting out of my way? I'm in a hurry.*



? Language Help

The phrase **would you kindly ...** above is used in much the same way as **would you mind ...** 3.

would you rather ...?

You use **would you rather ...?** when you want to ask if someone prefers something to something else:

- *'Would you rather live in the city centre?'*
'No, but I don't want to live quite so far out. Let's go on looking.'
- *'I've made some tea, but would you rather have coffee?'*
'Tea will be fine, thanks.'
- *We have a villa available in Greece during those dates. Or would you rather go to Cyprus?*



Language Help

1 You can use **would you sooner ...?** with the same meaning:

- 'Will you have a whisky or **would you sooner** have a glass of wine?'
'A glass of red wine would be very nice, thanks.'
- 'Do you want to eat out or **would you sooner** get a takeaway?'
'Let's get a takeaway. There's a programme I want to watch on TV.'

2 In very informal contexts you can sometimes omit the verb, pronoun and adverb. Thus instead of saying:

- **Would you rather** have red or white wine?

you can say:

- Red or white?

A singer in the family

Sue I think I hear someone singing?

Liz That's my daughter. She's practising for her lesson later today.

Sue She sounds good. **Would** she play at one of my small charity concerts, do you think? Can she play the piano?

Liz I'll ask her if she would sing for you. She was taking piano lessons, but she's given them up for the moment to concentrate on her singing and on her school work.

Sue **Will** she take up singing professionally?

Liz She'd like to be an opera singer, but it's too soon to tell whether she'll be good enough or not.

Sue One of my friends was an opera singer before she gave up her career to have children. She worked in the Milan opera house for many years. **Would you like to** meet her?

Liz I certainly would. It would give me a much better idea of what's involved in a singing career.

Sue She's coming to visit me some time later this month. Shall I give you a ring when she's here?

Liz That would be great!

Eating in

- Jack** **Would you like to** try that new French restaurant tonight?
- Liz** It's not got very good reviews, unfortunately. And Bill and Sue said it wasn't very good when they went.
- Jack** **Would you sooner** just go to our usual Italian restaurant, then? It's always reliable.
- Liz** **Won't** they be closed tonight? It's Monday.
- Jack** So it is and they always close on Mondays. **Would you rather** stay in and get a takeaway?
- Liz** Yes. Let's do that. **Indian or Chinese?**
- Jack** It's your turn to choose. I chose last time.
- Liz** Let's get Chinese. **Would** you hand me over the file with the menus in it, please?
- Jack** Here it is. You phone and order and I'll get some drinks. **A gin and tonic?**
- Liz** No. I'd rather have a glass of wine tonight, please.
- Jack** OK. **Red?**
- Liz** Yes, please.

Unit 4

SHALL AND SHOULD

Shall

How to use it

Shall was formerly used with **I** and **we** to ask questions about the future, **will** being used with other personal pronouns. This is now considered old-fashioned and **will** is now commonly used with all personal pronouns to ask questions about the future.

1 You can make a suggestion about what you and someone else could do by using **shall** with **we** in a question:

- *'Shall we go now?'*
'Yes. I'll get my coat.'
- *'Shall we take a vote on it?'*
'That's a good idea.'
- *'Shall we try the new Chinese restaurant?'*
'Sure. I've heard it's very good.'
- *'Shall we eat out tonight?'*
'I'm too tired to go out. Let's get a takeaway.'
- *'Shall we ask Jane to join us?'*
'Certainly. I'll give her a ring.'
- *'Shall we continue this discussion tomorrow?'*
'Yes. It's getting a bit late.'

Language Help ?

You can also use **let's** in conjunction with **shall we?** in this context:

- *'Let's go home now, shall we?'*
'I'd like to stay a bit longer, but you go on without me, if you want.'
- *'There are no seats left for the concert. Let's go to the cinema instead, shall we?'*
'Yes. Let's have a look and see what's on.'

2 You can use **shall** with the personal pronouns **I** and **we** when offering to do something:

- *'Shall we deliver these for you, Mrs Brown?'*
'No, thank you. I'll take them with me.'
- *'Shall I post the book to you?'*
'Don't bother doing that. I'll call round and collect it.'
- *'Shall we order this book for you?'*
'No, thanks. I need it right away. I'll try and find it somewhere else.'
- *'Shall we send the goods to your work address?'*
'No. Send them to my home address, please.'
- *'Shall I telephone you when your dress is ready, Mrs Carter?'*
'Yes, please.'



Language Help

You can also use **should** in this context:

- *'Should I send you the bill?'*
'No. I'll write a cheque now. How much do I owe you?'
- *'Should I order the dress in a smaller size for you?'*
'Yes, please. I like it very much.'

3 You can also use **shall** when you are asking for advice or a suggestion:

- *'Shall I accept this offer for the house or wait and see if there are other offers?'*
'I'd wait. You're not in any hurry to sell, after all.'
- *'Shall I do roast beef for dinner tonight or is it a bit hot for a roast?'*
'It's meant to be very hot today. I think something like a salmon salad would be better.'
- *'Shall I drive you there?'*
'No. I'd take the train. The traffic's appalling on that road.'
- *'Shall I buy Jane some chocolates by way of apology?'*
'I wouldn't do that. She's on a diet. Get her some flowers instead.'

Should

How to use it

1 You use **should** to ask if something is the right, correct, sensible, appropriate, preferable, etc, thing to do. The question sometimes takes the form of a suggestion, an offer or a request for advice:

- *'Should we turn left or right here?'*
'We turn right. I've just looked at the map.'
- *'Should we send for a doctor or take Jim to the A&E department at the hospital?'*
'We'd take him to A&E. I think he's broken his wrist.'
- *'Should we look for somewhere to stay overnight? It's getting late.'*
'Yes, we'd better. There's a list of small hotels in my briefcase. Could you have a look at it?'
- *'Should we allow Tom to go to the pop festival?'*
'I think we should tell him that he can go for one day on Saturday, but that he has to be home by 11.30. We don't want him camping out there.'
- *'Should I threaten to resign unless I get a reasonable salary increase?'*
'I wouldn't if I were you. It's not a good time to ask for a rise. There's a rumour that the directors are considering making some people redundant.'
- *'Should children be taught to cook at school?'*
'Yes, I think so, and I think they should be taught about nutrition and diet, too.'
- *'Should shops be open for business on Sunday?'*
'I don't really think so. I think workers have a right to have one day off and people can shop on the other six days in the week.'
- *'Should teachers give students more homework?'*
'No. The students get quite enough homework at the moment. It takes some of them all evening to do it.'

You can use **ought to** instead of **should** in questions in this context:

- *'Ought we to ring and book a table?'*
'I don't think we need to. The restaurant's never busy on a Monday evening.'

- 'Our travel tickets haven't arrived yet. **Ought we to** contact the travel agent?'
'Yes. I think we'd better. We leave the day after tomorrow.'
- '**Ought we to** get the car serviced before we set out on such a long journey?'
'No. I had it serviced just last month.'
- '**Ought we to** offer to help Dad with the garden. He's hurt his back quite badly.'
'I already have offered, but Jim and Jack are helping him and they don't need anyone else.'

2 You can also use the contracted negative form **shouldn't** in this context, often when you think a negative reply is likely, although you sometimes use it when you want to make a request or offer more emphatic or persuasive. You can use the longer negative form **should not** in more formal situations:

- '**Should** the board **not** consider a less expensive alternative?'
'They already have. They rejected it because it was obviously going to be ineffective.'
- '**Should** the students **not** be asked to take part in voluntary work after school?'
'We encourage them to do so but we cannot make this compulsory. For a start, some students have paid jobs after school.'
- '**Shouldn't** we turn back now? We're not going to reach the summit today and there's a mist coming down?'
'Yes. We'd better try to get back down the mountain before the mist gets any worse.'
- '**Shouldn't** more sport be taught in schools?'
'Ideally, yes, but the present curriculum simply doesn't allow time for that. Still, students have plenty of opportunity to take part in sport after school.'
- '**Shouldn't** we leave for the airport now?'
'No. We'd be far too early. We'll leave in about an hour.'
- '**Shouldn't** the school authorities be doing more to stamp out bullying?'
'They're doing their best, but it's a very difficult problem. A lot of students are too scared to report the bullies.'
- '**Shouldn't** the government be doing more to take action against global warming?'
'They say that they are, but that it is a gradual and difficult process.'

You can also use the negative form **oughtn't** or **ought not to**, in the same way that you can use **shouldn't** or **should not** in this context:

- *'Ought you not to look at other properties in the area before you put in an offer for the house?'*
'We've looked at quite a few already and, in any case, we really love that house. We really want to buy it.'
- *'Ought they not to have arrested him before this?'*
'Apparently, the police didn't have enough evidence against him until today.'
- *'Oughtn't we to stop and ask for directions? I think we're lost.'*
'I think we are. I'll go and ask that man over there.'
- *'Oughtn't you to stop and have a rest? You've been driving all morning.'*
'You're right. I'll stop at the next service station and we can stretch our legs and get a coffee.'
- *'Oughtn't you to ask the neighbours to keep an eye on the house while you're on holiday? There have been a few burglaries in this area recently.'*
'I don't need to ask the neighbours this year. My sister's going to stay in the house while I'm away.'

3 You can use **should** with **have** and a past participle to ask if something that was done in the past was the right, correct, sensible, appropriate, preferable, etc, thing to do. The question sometimes takes the form of a suggestion, an offer or a request for advice:

- *'Should we have turned left instead of right back there? This doesn't look like the right road.'*
'You could be right. I'll stop and have a look at the map.'
- *'Should you have given the job to Jane Brown? She doesn't have much experience.'*
'I think I did the right thing. She's very highly qualified and she's extremely enthusiastic, which is important in that job.'
- *'Should Sue have taken that job? It's way beneath her abilities and qualifications.'*
'There was nothing else available and she needed a job in a hurry to provide for her and the children.'
- *'Should the school principal have called in the police before contacting the parents of the students who were accused?'*
'It wasn't his decision. The police were called in by the parents of the student who was attacked.'

You can use **ought to** with **have** instead of **should have** in questions in this context:

- *'Ought we to have re-advertised the post rather than appointing him?'*
'That would have been a wise decision. He's turned out to be completely incompetent.'
- *'Ought Sue to have given your name as a reference?'*
'Yes. I did say that that was all right, but she told several lies on her CV.'

4 You can also use the contracted negative form **shouldn't have** to ask a question in this context. You often use the negative form when you think a negative reply is likely. You can use the longer negative form **should not have** in more formal situations:

- *'Should we not have applied for planning permission for the building work?'*
'No. We only need planning permission if we are going to add an extension to the building. We are only carrying out renovations.'
- *'Shouldn't you have booked a table?'*
'I didn't think it was necessary. The restaurant's usually very quiet at this time of year.'
- *'Shouldn't we have locked up?'*
'No. Bob's working late and he said he'll lock up.'
- *'Shouldn't they have taken all the furniture when they moved?'*
'No. I bought some of the furniture with the house.'

You can also use the contracted negative form **oughtn't to have** in this context, often when you are expecting a negative reply. You can use the longer form **ought not to have** in more formal contexts:

- *'Ought the government not to have taken action earlier to protect the economy?'*
'They say that they acted as soon as they were made aware of the situation.'
- *'Ought they not to have postponed the exam when so many students were ill?'*
'They couldn't do that. It was a public exam and the rest of the schools in the country were involved.'
- *'Oughtn't they to have reported the matter to the police right away?'*
'They couldn't really have done so. They suspected Jim from the minute when they discovered the embezzlement, but they had absolutely no proof.'

Dad's present

- Salesman** We don't have a copy of the book in stock, John. **Shall** I order it for you? It'll only take a few days.
- John** Yes, please. I'd like it as soon as possible. It's for my father's birthday on the 22nd.
- Salesman** It'll be here in plenty of time. **Shall** I give you a ring when the book comes in?
- John** No, thanks. I don't want my father to know about it. He might take the call and that would spoil the surprise.
- Salesman** **Shall** I send you a note then?
- John** No, thanks. Dad might wonder why you're writing to me. I'll come into the shop in a few days and see if the books are here. **Should** I pay for it now?
- Salesman** Oh, no. Just pay for it when you get it. **Should** I give you a note of the price? I have it right here.
- John** No, thanks. I know how much it is. I've been saving up for it.
- Salesman** It's quite expensive, isn't it?
- John** It is, but it's well worth the price. Dad's going to love it.

Missing friends

- Sam** **Shouldn't** we be leaving soon? The bus leaves in about quarter of an hour and it's at least a five-minute walk to the bus stop. We don't want to miss it.
- Sue** **Shouldn't** we wait for Jim and Meg?
- Sam** If we do, and they're not here soon, we'll miss the bus. **Should** we ring Jim on his mobile and see if they're on their way? They should have been here by now.
- Sue** That's a good idea. I'll ring him. There's no reply. **Should** we wait and get the next bus?
- Sam** It wouldn't get us there in time. Let's go.
- Sue** OK. **Shouldn't** we go through the park? It's quicker. **Ought** we to leave a message with Mum for Jim and Meg, saying we've gone.
- Sam** There's no time to do that. We're going to be late. We'll have to run.
- Sue** Here's the bus coming. We've just made it! I don't know what can have happened to Jim and Meg.

How to use it

1 You can use **must** in questions to ask if something is necessary:

- *'Must we leave now? I'm having such fun!'*
'Yes. If we don't, we'll miss the last train.'
- *'Must we postpone our holiday?'*
'I'm afraid so. I can't get away. All police leave has been cancelled during the current murder investigation.'
- *'Must the students move out of the flat?'*
'I'm afraid so. The owners have given us notice. They want to move back in themselves.'
- *'Must my aunt go into a care home?'*
'I'm afraid so. She's much too frail to look after herself and she is suffering from short-term memory loss.'
- *'Must you declare so many of the workers redundant?'*
'Unfortunately, yes. I simply have to cut costs urgently.'



Language Help

1 You can sometimes use **do ... have to ...?** instead of **must** in this context, especially if it is a less formal situation:

- *'Do we **have to** drive there? I get travel sick.'*
'Unfortunately, there's no other way of getting there.'
- *'Do we **have to** go into the city this morning? I'm feeling very tired.'*
'Yes, we do. I promised the children we would take them to the museum.'

- *'Does Jim **have to** sell the flat?'*
'Yes. He and Sue are getting a divorce and he has to give her half the value of the flat.'

2 You especially use **don't ... have to ...?** when you want to use the negative form to ask if something is not necessary:

- *'**Don't** you **have to** declare any of the workers redundant any more?'*
'No. Sales have increased beyond expectation and business is booming.'
- *'**Don't** we **have to** leave now?'*
'No. Jim and Liz have asked us to stay with them. We can go back in the morning.'

2 You can sometimes use the contracted negative form **mustn't** when you want to ask if it is important that something is not done, although this construction is not very common. In more formal contexts you can use the longer form **must not**:

- *'**Mustn't** people reply to such letters, then?'*
'Absolutely not! They're part of a nationwide fraud scam.'
- *'**Mustn't** the soldiers be given any information about where they're going?'*
'They must definitely not. We can't risk them telling anyone else. The enemy must not find out.'
- *'**Must** the children **not** tell anyone at all, even their parents?'*
'Definitely not!'

must you?

You use **must you ...?** when you want to tell someone that what they are doing is annoying or upsetting you. It sometimes takes the form of a rhetorical question:

- ***Must you** have that radio tuned up so high? I'm trying to work!*
- *'**Must you** keep interrupting? This is an important meeting.'*
'The caller says that this is urgent.'
- *'**Must you** vacuum the room just now? I'm trying to listen to some music.'*
'Sorry. I need to clean the flat this evening, but I'll soon be finished.'

READING

Noisy gardening

- Jim **Must you** mow the lawn just now? That mower's making such a dreadful noise and I'm trying to study.
- Bob I promised Dad that we'd cut the grass before he and Mum get back from holiday. **Must you** study in the garden? You'd be more comfortable inside.
- Jim No. It's far too hot inside, but I can't work here with all that noise going on.
- Bob **Do you have to** do your work just now? Can't you do it later?
- Jim My exams start on Monday. I have to get as much work done as possible before then. **Must you** finish the lawn just now? Mum and Dad don't get back till tomorrow afternoon.
- Bob I need to finish the lawn just now because I'm playing football tomorrow morning and I'm going out tonight with Mary. Don't mention that to anyone, though.
- Jim **Mustn't** I even tell Mum and Dad?
- Bob Certainly not. I don't want anyone teasing me about having a new girlfriend. Mary's just a friend.
- Jim So you say!

PRACTICE

1 **A** Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

could can shall must shouldn't

- _____ you ask your parents' permission before you accept your pen pal's invitation to visit her?
- _____ we take a break and have some coffee?
- _____ you have the television volume so high? I'm trying to read.
- _____ you stand on that leg? Your ankle is very swollen.
- _____ I see some form of identification, please?

B Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

- Mary _____?
Liz No. I don't think that sweater would fit Jane. It looks far too big.
- Sue _____?
Bob Sure. I'll help you with your luggage. I'll take these two suitcases.
- Jack _____?
John No. Sue can't ski, but she's going to take some lessons at the resort.
- Bob _____?
Jill I'd love a drink, thank you. A glass of white wine would be nice.
- Liz _____?
Teacher Yes. You must wear school uniform tomorrow. It's an official school outing.

2 A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

should could will can't won't

- _____ you get your sister to look after the dog while we're away?
- _____ you accept his invitation?
- _____ you stay for dinner? There's plenty of food.
- _____ you have left your keys in the car?
- _____ we let him off with just a warning this once?

B Supply questions to the answers to complete the following dialogue:

An eye operation

- Jack _____?
- Tom The doctors don't know whether Mary will be able to see again or not after the operation.
- Jack _____?
- Tom No. I don't think they will know soon. I got the impression it would be a long process.
- Jack _____?
- Tom No. Her father said that we shouldn't visit her just yet. At the moment only members of the family are allowed to see her in hospital.
- Jack _____?
- Tom Yes. I'm sure it would be OK to send her some flowers. Mary loves flowers.
- Jack On second thoughts, _____?
- Tom I hadn't thought of that, but she might well get upset if she knows the flowers are there but she can't see them. Perhaps we should just send a card.

3

A Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

1. Sue _____?
Jim No, I don't think we should have waited any longer for Jane. She should learn to be punctual.
2. Jane _____?
Jean No, I definitely won't go to the meeting, even if I receive a personal invitation.
3. Bill _____?
Jane No, I certainly would not have chosen that resort if I had known that it would be so hot here.
4. Anne _____?
Jill Yes, I think we should send for a doctor and right away at that. Sue looks really ill.
5. Jim _____?
Sue Yes, I'm afraid I must go now. If I don't, I'll miss the train.

B Supply questions to the answers to complete the following dialogue:**A broken computer**

- Jane _____?
Tom No, I'm sorry, but I can't repair this computer.
- Jane _____?
Tom Yes, You will have to get a new one. I don't think even an expert could repair this. It's too old.
- Jane _____?
Tom Yes, I'll come and help you choose one, but I can't come today.
- Jane _____?
Tom Yes, I can come tomorrow.
- Jane _____?
Tom OK, I'll meet you outside Technoworld at one o'clock. Don't be late!

4 A Provide an appropriate question to each given answer:

1. Amy Don't you like tea or _____?
Sue Yes. I'd much rather have coffee, thanks.
2. Bob _____?
Bill I don't see how the prisoner could have escaped. He's in a high-security jail.
3. Anne _____?
Jane No. Jim couldn't swim, but I'm not sure that his drowning was an accident.
4. Jack _____?
Ben No. He couldn't hear the police siren. His hearing's badly impaired and he didn't have his hearing aid switched on.
5. Jack _____?
Liz Well, I suppose we should call the police but, on the other hand, the intruder's only a boy and no damage was done.

B Rephrase the following questions in a more formal way:

1. Water with the whisky?
_____?
2. We're off to the pub. Coming?
_____?
3. Some wine?
_____?
4. Red or white?
_____?
5. We're going out for a pizza. Join us?
_____?

5

A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

would may must can shall

1. _____ you possibly look after the kids for a couple of hours?
2. _____ you have forgiven him if you had known the reason for his actions?
3. _____ we stay in all morning when it's such a nice day?
4. _____ we study just now and go shopping after lunch?
5. _____ I help you, sir?

B Replace the question word or phrase in the following sentences with another question word without changing the meaning:

1. **Might** Jack have been involved in the fraud?
_____?
2. **May** I help you with that?
_____?
3. **Is** the child **able to** tell you her name?
_____?
4. **Can** I enquire where you heard about our firm?
_____?
5. **Do I have to** wear a skirt to the party?
_____?

Part 4 Question Tags

A **question tag** is a very short phrase that is added at the end of a statement. Doing so turns the statement into a **yes/no question**. Question tags are particularly common in spoken English.

1 In the question tag you use the same tense of the auxiliary verb, such as **be, have, do**, or modal verb, such as **can, could, may, might, will, would, shall, should, must**, as you do in the statement and follow this with the relevant personal pronoun:

- *'You are still working there, aren't you?'*
'Yes. I've been there ten years now.'
- *'Jim was at the meeting, wasn't he?'*
'Yes. He was one of the first to arrive.'
- *'They weren't married at the time, were they?'*
'No. They didn't get married till several years later.'
- *'He's still got the document, hasn't he?'*
'Yes. He keeps it in a safe place.'
- *'She doesn't have a spare room, does she?'*
'No. She has one bedroom and a small room that she uses as a study.'
- *'They did receive an invitation to the party, didn't they?'*
'Yes. I delivered it in person.'

2 You usually add a positive question tag to a negative statement. When you do so you expect a negative answer:

- *'He can't afford such an expensive car, can he?'*
'No, but his parents are helping him with the cost.'
- *'She doesn't have a spare room, does she?'*
'No. She has one bedroom and a small room that she uses as a study.'

You usually add a negative question tag to a positive statement. When you do so you expect a positive answer. Negative question tags are mostly contracted, except in very formal contexts:

- *'It was a delicious meal, wasn't it?'*
'Yes, it was. Sue is such a good cook.'
- *'It was a dreadful play, wasn't it?'*
'Yes, and it was badly acted, too.'

Negative statements include broad negatives such as **hardly**, **rarely**, **seldom**, **never**, etc:

- *'He's hardly ever at home these days, is he?'*

3 If the statement does not contain an auxiliary or modal verb, the relevant form of the verb **do (do, does, did)** is used in the question tag:

- *'Mother loved it here, didn't she?'*
'Yes. She did and she hated moving to the city.'
- *'She looks after the children herself, doesn't she?'*
'Yes, she does. She says she can't afford to pay for childcare.'

4 Note that you can add a positive question tag to a positive statement when you want to indicate exceptional interest, surprise, anger or annoyance:

- *You've lived here for some time, have you? It's strange that we've never met before.*
- *That's an apple tree, is it? I thought it was a pear tree.*
- *He's decided he wants his job back, has he? Well, he's not going to get it.*

5 When you are making a statement about your own opinions, tastes, habits, etc, you can add a question tag containing **you** after the statement to find out if someone shares your opinion, taste, habit, etc:

- *I think this is his best painting, don't you?*
- *I love this time of year, don't you?*

6 If you are asking someone to do something, you sometimes add a tag, possibly to make the request sound less like an order:

- *Wait here a minute, **will you?***
- *Look after the house when we're away, **won't you?***

If such a request is in the negative, you can use **will you?** as a question tag:

- *Don't let the children out of your sight, **will you?***

7 If you are making a suggestion to someone by using the phrase **let's**, you often add the tag **shall I?** or **shall we?** to check that the other person or people are in agreement with you:

- *Let's get on with the meeting, **shall we?***
- *Let's eat now, **shall we?***

Am

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

There is no contracted negative form of **am** in Standard English. In informal English you sometimes use **aren't** as a contraction for **am not**, although this is used only in very informal contexts. You can sometimes use the longer form **am not** at the end of sentences in formal contexts:

- *'I'm disturbing you, **aren't I?**'*
'I'm afraid you are. I have to finish this essay this evening.'
- *'I'm talking nonsense, **aren't I?**'*
'I'm afraid so. You really don't understand the situation.'
- *'I'm still employed by you, **aren't I?**'*
'Not any more. You're sacked!'

Language Help ?

You can sometimes use the longer form **am I not?** at the end of sentences in formal contexts:

- *'I'm still entitled to a share of my father's estate, **am I not?**'*
'No. Your father left all his money and property to charity.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'I'm not the first person to say that, **am I?**'*
'No. We've had several similar comments.'
- *'I'm not last, **am I?**'*
'Not quite. A few more runners have yet to finish.'

- *'I'm not late, am I?'*
'No. I was very early.'
- *'I'm not taking up too much of your time, am I?'*
'Not at all, madam. It's our job to provide a public information service, after all.'

Is

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'It's a lovely day, isn't it?'*
'Yes. It's beautiful.'
- *'He's a big baby, isn't he?'*
'Yes, and yet both his brothers were quite small at birth.'
- *'This cake's delicious, isn't it?'*
'Yes, and it's most unusual.'
- *'Sue's such a generous person, isn't she?'*
'Yes, she is. She's one of the kindest people I know.'
- *'Life's complicated, isn't it?'*
'It certainly is.'



2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'She's not being entirely honest, is she?'*
'No, but then she rarely is.'
- *'He's not exactly the ideal candidate for the job, is he?'*
'Absolutely not! In fact, he's the least suitable of all the candidates.'
- *'It isn't my responsibility, is it?'*
'No, but you could at least try to help improve the situation.'
- *'This place isn't really suitable as a wedding venue, is it?'*
'No, not really. For a start, it's far too small.'

- *'This house is never very warm, is it?'*
'No. The central heating system is very old and totally inadequate.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *This is a first edition of the Dickens' novel, is it? How fascinating?*
- *'This is a genuine Roman vase that's been dug up, is it? I didn't think the Romans ever reached this area?'*
'This is as far north as they got.'
- *This is your idea of an apology, is it? Well, I don't think much of it.*

Are

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'These documents are genuine, aren't they?'*
'Definitely. I've just collected them from the lawyer.'
- *'Those new houses are for sale, aren't they?'*
'Yes. They came on the market last week. A few have been sold already.'
- *'The students are waiting for the results of their exams, aren't they?'*
'Yes, they are, and most of them are very nervous.'
- *'The wedding guests are waiting in the hotel, aren't they?'*
'Yes. They're waiting for the bride and groom to finish having their photographs taken.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'The dancers aren't very good, are they?'*
'Not yet, but they've only just started practising.'

- *'The brothers aren't very alike, are they?'*
'Not at all.'
- *'The couple aren't very happy together, are they?'*
'No. They haven't been for several years.'
- *'These suitcases aren't all Sue's, are they?'*
'They certainly are. Sue always brings far too much luggage.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *'These are the original documents, are they? They don't look old enough.'*
'Yes. They've been very well preserved.'
- *'Jane and Bill are already married, are they?'*
'Yes. They eloped because they didn't want the big wedding that Jane's mother was planning.'
- *'These are the costumes for the play, are they? They're not nearly finished and the dress rehearsal is the day after tomorrow.'*

Was

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'She was beautiful as a young woman, wasn't she?'*
'She certainly was, and she's still an attractive woman, despite her age.'
- *'Jim was a very generous person, wasn't he?'*
'He was, indeed, and it was typical of him to leave so much money to charity.'
- *'It was a lovely wedding, wasn't it?'*
'Yes, and John and Mary looked so happy!'
- *'The journey was dreadful, wasn't it?'*
'It was absolutely appalling. I thought we'd never get home.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'He wasn't intending to go to university this year, was he?'*
'No. He was intending to go on a gap year, but he won't be able to now that he is ill.'
- *'Sue wasn't Bill's first wife, was she?'*
'No. Bill was a widower for several years before he met Sue.'
- *'That holiday wasn't really worth the money, was it?'*
'No, not really. The hotel was very uncomfortable.'
- *'The doctor wasn't responsible for the patient's death, was he?'*
'No, but the patient's family blamed him.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *'Mary was still Jim's secretary then, was she? I thought she had left the firm by then.'*
'No, she didn't leave until the following year.'
- *'That was Anne's idea, was it? Usually she lets her husband make all the decisions.'*
'That's true, but this is a subject that she feels very strongly about.'
- *'That man was a policeman, was he? Why wasn't he wearing uniform.'*
'He's a detective. Detectives don't wear uniform.'

Were

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'They were friends once, weren't they?'*
'Yes, but they quarrelled bitterly while they were at university.'
- *'The buildings were demolished some time ago, weren't they?'*
'Oh yes. It was at least ten years ago.'

- 'The villagers were all killed in the bomb attack, *weren't they?*'
'Yes. There were absolutely no survivors of the atrocity.'
- 'The young men were cousins, *weren't they?*'
'Yes. In fact, their mothers were twin sisters.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- 'The singers weren't very good, *were they?*'
'No, but they're just an amateur group and they raise money for charity.'
- 'They weren't very enthusiastic about the idea, *were they?*'
'They certainly weren't. We'll have to take our proposal elsewhere.'
- 'The twins weren't the youngest children in the family, *were they?*'
'There was a little boy two years younger than the twins.'
- 'The facilities in the hotel weren't very modern, *were they?*'
'They certainly were not. The whole place needs to be completely refurbished.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- 'They were married, *were they?* We all thought that they were just living together.'
'Yes. They got married shortly after they first met.'
- 'The youths were bold enough to steal flowers from your front garden, *were they?*'
'Yes, and in broad daylight, too! When I went out they ran away, but I gave the police a description of them.'
- 'The two young blonde women were uninvited guests, *were they?* What a nerve!'
'Apparently, ours was not the first wedding reception that they've gatecrashed!'

Going to the zoo

- Meg** It's not a very nice day, **is it?**
- Liz** No. It's not, although it's not actually raining, **is it?**
- Meg** No, but it looks as though it might start raining very soon.
- Liz** That's too bad. I promised the children I would take them to the zoo today.
- Meg** You're not going to go, **are you?**
- Liz** Yes. The children have raincoats and wellingtons and they don't mind the rain. You were thinking of coming with us, **weren't you?**
- Meg** Yes. I'd love to come. You're going this morning, **aren't you?**
- Liz** Yes. I'm hoping to leave in about an hour, if that suits you.
- Meg** Yes. That's fine. The zoo was very crowded last time we went in the afternoon, **wasn't it?**
- Liz** Yes, and the children don't really enjoy it when it's busy. We'll get there just as it opens. It should be quiet then. The zoo was practically empty last time we went at opening time, **wasn't it?**
- Meg** Yes. In fact, if I remember correctly we were the only people there, **weren't we?**
- Liz** Yes. I think we were. I hope it's like that this time.

Taking a gap year

- Tom You're not taking a gap year, **are you**, Jim?
- Jim No. I'm going straight to university. You're taking one, though, **aren't you**?
- Tom Yes. I've postponed my university entrance until next year. You weren't tempted to do the same, **were you**?
- Jim No, not really. I'd rather take a year off after I graduate. You're going travelling, **aren't you**?
- Tom Yes, but only for part of the year. I'm going to spend the rest of it doing voluntary work with a charity for homeless people.
- Jim That's what your brother did, **wasn't it**?
- Tom Yes, but he worked for a local one. I'm going to work for one in the city.
- Jim That's quite a long journey to do every day, **isn't** ?
- Tom It is, but I won't be travelling every day. Most of the time I'll stay with my sister. She lives quite near where I'll be working.
- Jim You're going travelling first, though, **aren't you**?
- Tom Yes. In fact I leave next week and I've got a lot to do. I really must go.
- Jim Have a good trip!

Unit 2

QUESTION TAGS WITH HAVE

Have

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'They have two houses, haven't they?'*
'Yes. One here and one in Spain.'
- *'All the rooms have en suite facilities, haven't they?'*
'Oh, yes. It's a very modern hotel.'
- *'The Smiths have several children, haven't they?'*
'Yes. They've got three sons and two daughters.'
- *'The houses in that street all have large gardens, haven't they?'*
'Yes. In fact most of the gardens are huge.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'We've hardly seen Jack this holiday, have we?'*
'No. He's been too busy with his new girlfriend!'
- *'They haven't rented a house this summer, have they?'*
'No. They decided to stay in a hotel instead.'
- *'The school football team haven't won this season, have they?'*
'No. They haven't, but a lot of good players have been unable to play because of injury or illness.'
- *'The buses haven't stopped running, have they?'*
'No. There's an all-night service in the city.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *'The workers have asked for more money, have they? I thought their last pay rise was more than generous.'*
'Yes, they've asked for a rise. Apparently, the factory just down the road pays their workers more.'
- *'Those youths have vandalized the phone box again, have they?'*
'Yes, and they got away before the police arrived.'
- *'Sam and Jill have decided to move in together, have they?'*
'Yes. They've rented a flat together, but I can't see that working out.'



Has

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'He has two sisters, hasn't he?'*
'Yes, and he's close to both of them.'
- *'She has a degree, hasn't she?'*
'Yes, she does, but she still can't find a job.'
- *'It's stopped raining, hasn't it?'*
'Yes. It's quite bright now.'
- *'The house has four bedrooms, hasn't it?'*
'Yes, it has, although one of them is very small.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'The plumber hasn't turned up yet, has he?'*
'No, and he's now an hour late.'

- *'Jim hasn't passed his driving test, **has he?**'*
'No, not yet, but he's applied to take it again.'
- *'The jury hasn't reached a decision yet, **has it?**'*
'No, and they've been considering their verdict for two days now.'
- *'It hasn't started snowing, **has it?**'*
'No, but it looks as though it's going to.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *'He's taken my car without permission again, **has he?** Well, this time I'm calling the police.'*
'Oh, don't do that. He'll bring it back safely. He thought you wouldn't mind.'
- *'Jack has asked you to lend him money again, **has he?** Well, don't give it to him.'*
'I'm not going to. He hasn't paid me back the last loan yet.'
- *'Bob's firm has gone bust, **has it?** That's a surprise. Bob said he was doing very well.'*
'A lot of small firms like his were badly affected by the recession.'

Had

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'He had made a lot of money by then, **hadn't he?**'*
'Oh, yes. He was a wealthy man by that time.'
- *'By then she'd realized that she had made a mistake, **hadn't she?**'*
'Yes, she had, but it was too late for her to do anything about it.'
- *'You had locked yourself out of your house again, **hadn't you?**'*
'Indeed, I had. It was late at night and freezing, too.'

- *'Most of the students had done enough work to pass the exam, hadn't they?'*
'Yes, and most of them did pass.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'They hadn't changed their minds about the job, had they?'*
'No. They just hadn't got round to sending a formal letter.'
- *'You hadn't forgotten to post the letter, had you?'*
'No. I had posted it in plenty of time, but it must have gone missing in the post.'
- *'No one had been in the house for years, had they?'*
'No. The owner had no relatives or friends and she was in a care home for at least five years.'
- *'The Smiths hadn't left a forwarding address, had they?'*
'No. They had not, and that was very inconvenient.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *'She had lied to the police, had she?'*
'Yes. She had, but a witness had seen her commit the crime.'
- *'He had broken into the same house again, had he?'*
'Yes, he had, and that time he had left fingerprints.'



- *'She had left home by then, had she?'*
'Yes. She was only sixteen when she left home.'

Medical ambition

- Sam John hasn't been selected for the football team this year, **has he?**
- Joe No, but he's not particularly disappointed. He hasn't played much football recently, **has he?**
- Sam No. He's taken up golf. You haven't seen him play, **have you?**
- Joe No, but I hear that he's very good. Of course, his father's a professional golfer.
- Sam You've taken up golf as well, **haven't you?**
- Joe Yes, but I don't have time to play very often and I'm not very good at it. It takes a lot of practice and I need a lot of time to study just now.
- Sam You have exams this year, **haven't you?**
- Joe Yes, and I really want to do well. I want to study medicine at university.
- Sam You have a brother who's a doctor, **haven't you?**
- Joe Yes, and my sister graduates in medicine in the summer. I want to carry on the family tradition!

A coffee bar experience

- Sue Anne and I were just talking about the new coffee bar. You've been to it, **haven't you**, Jane?
- Jane Yes. I thought it was very good. The coffee's excellent and they sell delicious sandwiches. Your sister Jean's been to it, Sue, **hasn't she?** I'm sure I saw her there.
- Sue Yes, but she says that she wouldn't go back there.
- Anne She had some kind of food poisoning, **hadn't she**, Sue?'
- Sue Yes, but we don't really know if she got it at the coffee bar. She had a sandwich there in the evening, but she had had lunch in a cheap burger place in the city. She might have got the stomach bug there.
- Anne Jean hasn't really recovered yet, **has she?**
- Sue No, not completely. She's still a bit weak.
- Jane I'm sorry to hear Jean's been ill, but I'd be surprised if she'd got food poisoning from a sandwich at the coffee bar. They're all freshly made. You've heard good reports of it, **haven't you**, Anne?
- Anne Yes. I know several people who like it a lot.
- Sue We'll never know where Jean got the bug, but you can understand why she doesn't want to go to the coffee bar again!

Do

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'You do still love Tom, don't you?'*
'Yes, but he is not the easiest person to live with.'
- *'We do get a lunch break, don't we?'*
'We do, but it's not a very long one, I'm afraid.'
- *'They provide breakfast, don't they?'*
'Yes. Breakfast is included in the room rate.'
- *'The police know about his history of violence, don't they?'*
'The victim's sister told them.'



Language Help

Note that if the relevant statement does not contain an auxiliary verb, the verb **do** is used in the question tag:

- *'You speak Spanish, don't you?'*
'Yes. I was brought up in Spain until I was ten.'

When you are making a statement about your own opinions, tastes, habits, etc, you can add the question tag **don't you?** after the statement to find out if someone shares your opinion, taste, habit, etc:

- *'I think this is her best work, don't you?'*
'It's certainly one of her finest.'

- *'I love French food, **don't you?**'*
'I do, indeed, and this is a particularly good example of it.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'You **don't** still own the property, **do you?**'*
'No. Tom and Jane bought it from me.'
- *'People **don't** still live there, **do they?**'*
'No. All of the houses are empty now.'
- *'Women workers there **don't** earn as much as the men, **do they?**'*
'No, for the most part, they don't.'
- *'Houses in that part of the city **don't** cost as much as they do here, **do they?**'*
'No. They're much cheaper.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *'You **know** my son, **do you?**'*
'Yes. We were at university together.'
- *'People here still **believe** in all that supernatural nonsense, **do they?**'*
'Yes. They do, and they don't think it's nonsense.'
- *'We **have** to leave as early as that, **do we?**'*
'Yes. It takes ages to go through the security checks at the airport.'

Does

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'He **does** really deserve the job, **doesn't he?**'*
'Yes, but he might not get it. The boss's nephew has also applied for the job.'

- *'The task **does** get more and more difficult, **doesn't it?**'*
'It certainly does.'
- *'She **does** look very much like her mother, **doesn't she?**'*
'Yes. The resemblance is quite remarkable.'
- *'The dog **does** look very thin, **doesn't it?**'*
'Yes, and yet it eats a lot.'

Language Help

If the relevant statement does not contain an auxiliary verb, the verb **do** is used in the question tag:

- *'She **lives** in the next street, **doesn't she?**'*
'Yes. Her house is just across from the park.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'She **doesn't** look well, **does she?**'*
'No. She's very pale.'
- *'The situation **doesn't** look very hopeful, **does it?**'*
'It certainly does not.'
- *'He **doesn't** make much money, **does he?**'*
'No, in fact, he makes very little.'
- *'The weather **doesn't** look very settled, **does it?**'*
'No. The weather forecast says it's going to be showery.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *'Sue **does** admit her mistake, **does she?**'*
'Yes. She doesn't want anyone else to be blamed.'
- *'She **does** realize that he's already married, **does she?**'*
'Yes, but she says she loves him anyway.'
- *'He **does** know the job is badly paid, **does he?**'*
'Yes, he does. He says that the money doesn't matter.'

Did

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'She **did** accept your invitation, **didn't she?**'*
'Yes. We went out for a meal together.'
- *'They **won** the contract, **didn't they?**'*
'Yes, and they made a considerable profit out of it.'
- *'The weather **did** improve in the course of the week, **didn't it?**'*
'Yes. In fact, by the end of the week, it was very warm.'
- *'You **lived** there once, **didn't you?**'*
'Yes. I lived there for a few years after my marriage.'

? Language Help

If the relevant statement does not contain an auxiliary verb, the verb **do** is used in the question tag:

- *'The thieves **killed** the old man, **didn't they?**'*
*'Yes, but it's possible they **didn't** really mean to kill him.'*

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'He **didn't** see you, **did he?**'*
*'No. I made quite sure he **didn't**.'*
- *'We **didn't** do badly, **did we?**'*
*'No. I thought we **did** very well, in fact.'*
- *'They **didn't** get to the summit, **did they?**'*
'No. The weather conditions got very bad and they had to turn back.'
- *'The workers **didn't** get what they wanted, **did they?**'*
'No. Management refused to meet their demands.'

3 Positive statements/ positive question tags

- *'You did think it was worth the risk, did you?'*
'Of course. Otherwise, I wouldn't have done it.'
- *'The child did all this by himself, did he?'*
'Yes. It's all his own work.'
- *'You did the job in one day, did you?'*
'Yes. I did.'

Going to a gig

- Jane You want to go to the gig next week, **don't you**, Liz?
- Liz Yes. I certainly do, but I don't know if I'll be able to get a ticket. Your brother said that it was sold out, **didn't he**?
- Jane Yes, but Jim told me that the local music shop still has tickets. You know where that is, **don't you**?
- Liz Yes. It's in King Street. I'll go there in my lunch break. You don't want any more tickets, **do you**?
- Jane No, thanks. My brother got some for me.
- Liz The gig doesn't finish until after the last bus has gone, **does it**?
- Jane No, but my brother says that special buses have been provided to take people to and from the gig. That sounds like a good idea, **doesn't it**?
- Liz Yes. It sounds like an excellent idea. You don't know where to get tickets for the bus, **do you**?
- Jane No. You could ask at the music shop.
- Liz I'll do that and let you know.

Essay topics

- Bill These essay topics all look very difficult, **don't they?**
- Jim They certainly do and Mr Smart's not given us very long to do them. He asked us to hand them in next Friday, **didn't he?**
- Bill He did, and most of them look as though they'll need quite a lot of research, **don't they?**
- Jim Yes, and that's very time-consuming, and we still have to do the rest of our homework.
- Bill I'd like to do the one on local history, but the research on that would take ages and I would need to spend a long time in the local library. It doesn't open on Sundays, **does it?**
- Jim No, and I think it closes early on Saturdays. Dad has a lot of stuff on local history. I'm sure he'd lend it to you. I can't do local history, because my last essay was on that.
- Bill That would be great, but your dad works away from home, **doesn't he?**
- Jim Yes. He usually does, but he's going to be at home all this week. Come over this evening.
- Bill Thanks. You eat dinner quite early, **don't you?** I won't disturb you then. I'll come over right after school.

Unit 4

QUESTION TAGS WITH CAN AND COULD

Can

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'The child can read, can't he?'*
'Yes, but he's shy about reading aloud.'
- *'Some of them can speak English, can't they?'*
'Yes. Most of them can.'
- *'We can park here, can't we?'*
'Yes. There aren't any restrictions here.'
- *'The children can use the playground, can't they?'*
'Certainly.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'The old man can't talk, can he?'*
'No, not since he had a stroke.'
- *'We can't smoke in here, can we?'*
'Certainly not! You'll have to go outside to smoke.'
- *'The young man can't drive a car, can he?'*
'No, but he plans to take driving lessons soon.'
- *'You can't tell me how to get there, can you?'*
'No, sorry. All I know is that it's about 40 km from London.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *'You can still afford to eat out, can you?'*
'Only at cheap burger joints.'
- *'The child can swim already, can she?'*
'Yes. She's been having lessons since she was a baby.'
- *'That small hotel can provide accommodation for all of us, can it?'*
'Yes. Apparently, there's an annexe at the back.'

Could

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'You could still go, couldn't you?'*
'Yes. I haven't cancelled the trip yet.'
- *'The neighbours could hear the noise, too, couldn't they?'*
'Yes. It was very loud.'
- *'Your grandfather could drive, couldn't he?'*
'Yes, but, of course, he had to give up when his vision began to get blurred.'
- *'We could go by train, couldn't we?'*
'Yes, but it's a very long journey.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'You couldn't go by plane, could you?'*
'No. There's no airport there.'
- *'Tom couldn't hear very well, could he?'*
'No, he couldn't and they think that that could have led to the accident.'

- *'They couldn't take those bags on board the plane, could they?'*
'No. The bags were far too big.'



- *'She couldn't send it by email, could she?'*
'No, she doesn't have access to the Internet.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *'Your grandmother could speak Russian, could she?'*
'Yes. She was an excellent linguist and she worked as a government interpreter.'
- *'You could get money from the company to pay for the management course, could you?'*
'Yes, provided I stay on with the company for a certain amount of time after finishing the course.'

A phobia

Meg I can park here, **can't I?**

Liz Yes. There aren't any parking restrictions here. I can get a lift back with you, **can't I?**

Meg Yes, of course. Let's meet back at the car in an hour. I have to be back home by lunch time.

Liz I'd better leave picking up my dress until next week. I couldn't get over to that part of the city and back in an hour, **could I?**

Meg You couldn't if you walk and a bus might get stuck in traffic, but you could take the underground. That would give you plenty of time.

Liz I really don't like going anywhere by underground. I'll leave the dress until next week.

Meg All that talk of terrorist attacks can make you nervous, **can't it?**

Liz It can, indeed, but that's not why I don't like the underground. I have a kind of phobia about being underground anywhere.

Meg That could have something to do with your brother's accident when he was exploring a cave, **couldn't it?**

Liz Yes. It could have. I was very young when the accident happened and it could have affected me.

Meg Well, we'd better get on. See you in an hour!

A driving favour

- Bob You can drive, **can't you**, Jim?
- Jim Yes, I can. I hardly ever get a chance to drive, though. Dad uses the car for his work.
- Bob If my mother lent you her car, you could drive that, **couldn't you**?
- Jim Yes. I suppose I could, but why would she want to do that? If she wants to go somewhere, she can drive herself, **can't she**?
- Bob Yes, she can, but she's going away for a few days and I need to get my stuff out of Tom's flat. I'll treat you to lunch if you'll drive me over there and back some time tomorrow. You could do that, **couldn't you**?
- Jim I could, but I'm not insured to drive your mother's car. That could be a problem, **couldn't it**?
- Bob It could, but Mum's sorted all that out. Apparently, her insurance policy covers all drivers, including young ones. I'm learning to drive it just now.
- Jim I couldn't get your mum to take me for a drive in the car just to show me the controls, **could I**?
- Bob No, I'm afraid not. She's already gone, but she's left the car handbook and her car's the same model as your dad's.

Unit 5

QUESTION TAGS WITH MAY AND MIGHT

May

How to use it

May as a question word is not very common in English and is almost always restricted to rather formal contexts. The contracted negative form **mayn't** is even less common and it is considered rather old-fashioned. Examples of **mayn't** are given below for guidance, but this use is best avoided by learners:

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'I may go to the party, mayn't I?'*
'Yes, if you promise to be back home by eleven.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'He mayn't compete next year, may he?'*
'No. By then he will be too old for the competition.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *'We may use his private library for our research, may we?'*
'Yes. It's very kind of him to let us do that.'
- *'She may still decide to emigrate, may she? I thought she'd definitely decided to stay here.'*
'She says she's still thinking about it.'

Might

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'My arm might be broken, mightn't it?'*
'It might be. We'll get it X-rayed, just in case.'
- *'Jill might still be able to go to drama college, mightn't she?'*
'Oh yes. She's applied for several others.'
- *'The child might be exaggerating the situation, mightn't she?'*
'She might be, but we'll have to investigate her claims, anyhow.'
- *'We might get a pay increase this year, mightn't we?'*
'We might, but it won't be a very large one, if we do. The firm isn't doing well.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'Her account of the accident mightn't be true, might it?'*
'No. She could well be lying.'
- *'Jack mightn't be able to play tomorrow, might he?'*
'He might not. His ankle is still quite painful.'
- *'The police mightn't have got the right man, might they?'*
'It certainly looks as though they might not. The killer has killed again.'
- *'The restaurant mightn't have closed yet, might it?'*
'There's a chance that it will still be open. It opens late on Fridays and Saturdays.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *'The mugger might get off with just a caution, might he?'*
'So my lawyer says. He's apparently very young.'

- *'The book might be very valuable, might it?'*
'Yes, according to the experts. It's a first edition, and apparently there were very few of that edition published.'
- *'Jack might be dropped from the team, might he? That seems a bit unfair.'*
'Jack might well be left out of next week's game. He's usually a good player, but he's not being playing well recently.'

To leave or not to leave

- Jill Jack may still leave his job, **may he?** I thought he had definitely decided to stay.
- Liz Yes. He's still thinking of leaving, although they offered him quite a large salary increase in order to get him to stay.
- Jill That must be tempting. He may not get such a well-paid job anywhere else in this area, **may he?**
- Liz He may well not, but he might consider moving out of the area, **mightn't he?**
- Jill He might very well do that. After all, he doesn't have any family ties here. He's not married, his parents are dead and his sister lives in London.
- Liz He may decide to join her there, **mayn't he?**
- Jill He may do. Certainly he would have a lot more job opportunities in London, but I know he doesn't like big cities and he's not especially close to his sister.
- Liz He mightn't have any choice but to move to a large city, **might he?**
- Jill He might well not. He's in rather a specialized field and most of the jobs in it are city-based.
- Liz We'll just have to wait and see what he decides to do.

A case of mistaken identity?

Jill Are you sure it was Tom you saw opening the safe? You might have been mistaken, **mightn't you?**

Meg I suppose I might have made a mistake. I didn't put the office light on and it was very dark in the room where the safe is. Whoever it was was wearing a dark coat.

Jill It might even have been a woman, then, **mightn't it?**

Meg I suppose it might have been.

Jill You might just have assumed it was Tom because he works in that room, **mightn't you?**

Meg I suppose I might have done, but no one should have been in that room at that time of night and no one is supposed to open the safe without someone else being present.

Jill You said you were going to ring the boss. You **mightn't** do any good by doing that, **might you?** You don't even know if anything was taken from the safe.

Meg You're right. Ringing the boss might well not do any good and it might just cause trouble. I should wait until Monday morning and find out if anything's missing. If it is I'll have to tell the boss what I saw.

Unit 6

QUESTION TAGS WITH WILL AND WOULD

Will

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- 'You will take care, **won't you?** That's a dangerous area.'
'I'll be very careful, don't worry!'
- 'Sue will be back tonight, **won't she?**'
'Yes, although she might be very late.'
- 'I will be able to play tennis again, **won't I?**'
'Yes, you will, but you'll have to give your elbow time to heal properly.'
- 'You will give me a hand with my luggage, **won't you?**'
'Of course I will.'



2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- 'Jim will never forgive her, **will he?**'
'Definitely not.'
- 'No one will sympathize with him, **will they?**'
'No, they won't. He has only himself to blame.'
- 'That idea won't work, **will it?**'
'No. We tried it without success.'
- 'You won't forget to lock up, **will you?**'
'No. I won't forget.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *'He'll leave her without telling her he's going, will he?'*
'Yes. He says he can't face telling her.'
- *'You'll take that risk, will you?'*
'Yes. If I'm successful, I'll make a lot of money.'
- *'She'll charge as much as that, will she?'*
'She certainly will. She's very good, but she's certainly not cheap!'

Would

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'You would go to Canada if you could get time off work, wouldn't you?'*
'Yes. I'd love to go.'
- *'She would look after the children if you asked her, wouldn't she?'*
'Yes, she would, but she's not very well just now and I don't like to ask her.'
- *'He would recognize the thief if he saw him again, wouldn't he?'*
'Oh yes. He got a really good look at him.'
- *'This would fit Sam, wouldn't it?'*
'I'm sure it would.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'Wearing a seat belt wouldn't have prevented those injuries, would it?'*
'No, definitely not.'
- *'An operation wouldn't have saved her life, would it?'*
'No. The cancer was inoperable.'
- *'You wouldn't employ him again, would you?'*
'Under no circumstances would I give him any more work.'

- *'You wouldn't buy the car if he reduced the price, would you?'*
'No. The car's not in very good condition.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *They would pay as much as that for a holiday cottage, would they?*
- *'You would borrow money from an old lady who barely has enough to live on, would you?'*
'I didn't know my aunt was badly off.'

Going on a journey

- Mum You will phone me when you get there, **won't you?**
- Meg Of course I will, Mum. I know you worry when I'm driving that long journey. I should get there mid-afternoon, but you won't be at home then, **will you?**
- Mum No. I play golf on Tuesday afternoons, but I'll have my mobile with me.
- Meg You won't be able to hear the phone when you're playing, **will you?**
- Mum No. In any case, there's a club rule that we switch mobiles off when we're playing. But by mid-afternoon we'll be having tea in the clubhouse café.
- Meg I'll ring you as soon as I get to my flat. You won't worry if it's later than mid-afternoon, **will you?**
- Mum No. At least I'll try not to. I know there might be delays on the highway. Drive carefully, **won't you?**
- Meg Of course I will. I always do. Take care, **won't you?**
- Mum Yes, I will, and you do too. Have a safe journey.
- Meg Thanks, Mum. See you soon!

The prospect of a new job

- Mum You would take that job even if it meant a cut in salary, **would you?**
- Bob Yes, I would, Mum. It has far better prospects than my present job.
- Mum You would have to move house, **wouldn't you?**
- Bob The new job is based quite a distance from my present flat, but I could commute at first until I see how things go.
- Mum You wouldn't want to have a long journey after a hard day's work, **would you?**
- Bob No, I wouldn't, but I would want to spend some time looking round the area near the new office before I decided where to look for a flat. I might even decide to buy a flat, rather than rent one.
- Mum That would be very expensive, **wouldn't it?**
- Bob Yes. It will be quite expensive, but, in the long run, buying makes more economic sense than renting.
- Mum They would let you know fairly soon if they're going to offer you the job, **wouldn't they?**
- Bob Yes. They said they would let the successful applicant know tomorrow. You'll keep your fingers crossed for me, **won't you?**
- Mum Of course. The best of luck!

Unit 7

QUESTION TAGS WITH SHALL AND SHOULD

Shall

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'We shall miss this place, **shan't we?**'*
'We certainly shall, but it's time to move on.'
- *'I shall have to apologize to Jim, **shan't I?**'*
'Yes, you'd better. You really upset him.'

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'We **shan't** say any more about this, **shall we?**'*
'No. We'll try to forget all about it.'
- *'We **shan't** be wanting this any more, **shall we?**'*
'Certainly not! I'll put it in the bin.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *'We'll get the blame for this, **shall we?**'*
'Yes, almost definitely, although it was our boss's fault.'
- *'We'll get as much as that for the house, **shall we?**'*
'Yes. Property prices have escalated in this area.'

? Language Help

- 1 In modern English **shall** is uncommon except in formal contexts. **Will** can be used with all personal pronouns.
- 2 You can also use **let's** in conjunction with the question tag **shall we?** to make a suggestion about what you and someone else could do:
 - **'Let's go home now, shall we?'**
'I'd like to stay a bit longer, but you go on without me, if you want.'
 - **'There are no seats left for the concert. Let's go to the cinema instead, shall we?'**
'Yes. Let's have a look and see what's on.'

Should

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- **'We should really set out right away, shouldn't we?'**
'Yes. If we don't we'll miss the ferry.'
- **'Sam should see a doctor, shouldn't he?'**
'He certainly should. He's having dizzy spells.'
- **'I should consult a solicitor, shouldn't I?'**
'Yes. You need expert advice about the property dispute.'
- **'My parents should report the matter to the police, shouldn't they?'**
'Yes. The police ought to know that there's been an attempted burglary in the area.'



2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'We really **shouldn't** criticize her for what she did, **should we?**'*
'No. I would probably have done the same thing in her position.'
- *'They **shouldn't** have paid so much for that car, **should they?**'*
'No. The car isn't worth it.'
- *'He **shouldn't** work such long hours, **should he?**'*
'No. His health is being affected by it.'
- *'She **shouldn't** spend so much money on clothes, **should she?**'*
'No. She has a lot of debts.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *'We **should** know how to do this without any instructions, **should we?**'*
'They're obviously over-estimating our technological know-how.'
- *'She **should** be able to feed four children on that small amount of money, **should she?**'*
- *'You **should** go to work even if you're ill, **should you?**'*
'So my boss seems to think.'

Choosing a restaurant

- Mary Let's go out for a meal, **shall we?** There's nothing worth watching on television and we haven't been out for ages.
- Bob That's a good idea. Where would you like to go?
- Mary I was going to suggest Luigi's, but we shan't be able to go there anymore, **shall we?** It closed down last month when Luigi retired.
- Bob We shall miss it, **shan't we?**
- Mary Oh yes! The food was always very good and the staff were all very friendly.
- Bob We should really try somewhere new, **shouldn't we?**
- Mary Yes. We should be more adventurous. Quite a few new restaurants have opened here recently. Here's the list of local restaurants.
- Bob Let's try this French one, **shall we?**
- Mary Yes. Let's do that. I read a good review of it somewhere fairly recently.
- Bob It sounds quite a formal place. I shall have to change, though, **shan't I?**
- Mary Oh yes. It certainly doesn't sound like the kind of place you can go to wearing jeans! I'll just go and change, too.

A tight deadline

- Mark** We should really finish this work today, **shouldn't we?**
- Bob** Yes, we should, but I'm not sure if it's feasible. We really shouldn't have agreed to such a tight deadline, **should we?**
- Mark** No. We probably shouldn't have done, but it's too late for regrets and the customer is paying us a lot of money.
- Bob** You're right. We'd better get on with it. We should get some food delivered for lunch, though, **shouldn't we?** I've only had a cup of black coffee all day.
- Mark** Yes. We should eat. I skipped breakfast completely. I'll phone up and get some soup and sandwiches delivered.
- Bob** We shouldn't stop for very long, though, **should we?**
- Mark** Certainly not. In fact, I think we should eat as we work.
- Bob** Yes, we should, **shouldn't we?** We can't afford to lose any time at all.
- Mark** I've had an idea. Let's ring Tom and get him to give us a hand, **shall we?**
- Bob** That's a great idea. It's his day off today and I know he could do with earning some extra money.
- Mark** That's true and he's also an excellent worker.
- Bob** Sally should have his number, **shouldn't she?**
- Mark** Yes, but I've got his mobile number right here.

Must

How to use it

1 Positive statements/negative question tags

- *'We must meet for lunch soon, **mustn't we?**'*
'Yes. I'll give you a ring.'
- *'We must try out the new fish restaurant, **mustn't we?**'*
'Yes. I'd like that. I'll be in touch.'
- *'They must get out of there right away, **mustn't they?**'*
'Yes. They're in terrible danger.'
- *The students must study a lot harder, **mustn't they?***

2 Negative statements/positive question tags

- *'We must never tell anyone else about this, **must we?**'*
'We must certainly not.'
- *'No one must find out about this, **must they?**'*
'Absolutely no one.'
- *'They **mustn't** go up the mountain in bad weather, **must they?**'*
'They certainly must not. They're all inexperienced climbers.'
- *'He **mustn't** leave the area without telling the police, **must he?**'*
'No. In fact, he has to report to the police station once a week.'

3 Positive statements/positive question tags

- *'You must have the day off, must you?'*
'Yes. It's important. I've got an audition.'
'Well, the answer is no. Your work must come first.'
- *'The coins must have come from an ancient Roman settlement, must they?'*
'The experts certainly think so.'
- *'She must have known all along that her husband was the attacker, must she?'*
'The police think that there's no doubt about it.'



A ruined holiday

- Mary The children mustn't play in that river, **must they?**
- Sue No. They must certainly not. It looks filthy and it has a dreadful smell. We must report this to the letting agency right away, **mustn't we?**
- Mary Yes. I'll ring them right away. They described the cottage in the brochure as occupying an idyllic spot by a beautiful winding river. They must be made to apologize for such a misleading statement, **mustn't they?**
- Sue We need much more than an apology from them. I don't want to stay here any longer. It'll be impossible to keep the children away from the river. It doesn't even have a fence round it.
- Mary I'll ask them if they can find us another cottage to rent, but it's the height of the season. There might be nothing available.
- Sue If they can't find us anything else they must give us a refund, **mustn't they?**
- Mary I would think so, but getting the refund could take a long time and we promised the children a holiday in the country. I'll just ring.
- Sue What did they say?
- Mary Good news. They've offered us another cottage. Let's pack!

A secret

- May** It's exciting that Sally's getting married, isn't it, Aunt Liz?
- Liz** Yes, May. It's very exciting, indeed, but we mustn't tell anyone, **must we?**
- May** I suppose not, but it's so exciting. I'd like to tell everybody, especially Mummy.
- Liz** I expect it'll be all right for you to tell your mum, but you mustn't tell anyone else. Sally asked us to promise not to tell anyone and we must keep our promises, **mustn't we?**
- May** Yes, but I don't understand why Sally doesn't want anyone to know that she's got engaged to Bob. He's such a nice man.
- Liz** It's not really that she doesn't want anyone to know. It's just that she wants to tell people her exciting news herself and she wants to tell her mum and dad the good news first. We mustn't spoil the surprise, **must we?**
- May** No, Aunt Liz. I'll just tell Mummy and I'll get her to promise not to tell anyone else.
- Liz** That's a good idea, May.

PRACTICE



A Provide an appropriate question to each given answer, using question tags:

1. Sue _____?
Jim No. Jane certainly isn't usually as late as this.
2. Jane _____?
Jean No. I won't tell your parents you were out late.
3. Bill _____?
Jane Yes, of course. I'll come to the ball as your partner.
4. Anne _____?
Jill No. I don't know the new sales director, but Sue does.
5. Jim _____?
Sue Yes. We should indeed go home now.

B Supply questions to the answers to complete the following dialogue, using question tags.

Working late

- Jane _____?
- Tom No. I wasn't at the meeting. I had to work late.
- Jane _____?
- Tom No. Jack wasn't there either. Very few people were, I understand.
- Jane _____?
- Tom Yes. I heard what happened. Jim told me. Apparently, there was a rowdy argument.
- Jane _____?
- Tom No. No conclusion was reached.
- Jane _____?
- Tom Yes. There's to be another meeting next week.

2 A Choose the correct question tag to fill each blank:

shouldn't we couldn't it haven't we could it do we

1. We've still a long way to go, _____?
2. We don't know the result yet, _____?
3. We should get there before dark, _____?
4. The job could take a long time, _____?
5. The situation couldn't be much worse, _____?

B Provide an appropriate question to each given answer, using question tags:

1. Jill _____?
Sue No. I certainly won't let you down.
2. Jack _____?
Anne Yes. He has a well-paid job. He earns more than anyone else in the firm.
3. Bill _____?
Jane Yes. Tom did ask me to marry him, but I don't think I'm ready for marriage yet.
4. Sue _____?
Jane No. I haven't done my Christmas shopping yet.
5. Liz _____?
Jack Yes. I'm going to the conference.

3 A Choose the correct question word to fill each blank, using question tags:

will you isn't it should you aren't they shouldn't you

1. You should phone home, _____?
2. You shouldn't be at work today, _____?
3. You won't get the blame, _____?
4. The village is very pretty, _____?
5. The people here are very friendly, _____?

B Supply questions to the answers to complete the following dialogue, using question tags:

A shopping trip

- Meg _____?
- Liz Yes. I'm going shopping tomorrow.
- Meg _____?
- Liz Yes. Let's go together. That's an excellent suggestion.
- Meg _____?
- Liz Yes. I usually leave early. I like to get to the shops before they get too crowded.
- Meg _____?
- Liz No. Eight-thirty is not too early. That means we'll get to the shops by nine.
- Meg _____?
- Liz Yes. The shops should be empty at that time.

4 A Provide an appropriate question to each given answer, using question tags:

1. Amy _____?
Sue No. I'm not thinking of looking for another job. I'm happy here.
2. Bob _____?
Bill Yes. We could still catch the last bus. We'll have to leave right now, though.
3. Anne _____?
Jane No. I'm not still going out with Tom. We split up last month.
4. Jack _____?
Ben Yes. Mark is Bob's brother. They're completely different, though.
5. Jack _____?
Liz Yes. Tom bought my flat. He moves in next week.

B Choose the correct question tag to fill each blank:

wouldn't he couldn't you would he wasn't he could you

1. He wouldn't tell the police, _____?
2. He'd like to go out with Jane, _____?
3. You could ask your father for a loan, _____?
4. You couldn't afford such an expensive dress, _____?
5. Tom was the last to leave the office last night, _____?

5

A Provide an appropriate question to each given answer, using question tags:

1. Sam _____?
John Yes. I can ride a motor cycle.
2. Jack _____?
Joe Yes. I'll remember to give Anne the book.
3. Anne _____?
Sue No. Liz didn't give me a message from you. You know what a terrible memory she has.
4. John _____?
Bill Yes. Bob has a new girlfriend. He met her on holiday, apparently.
5. Meg _____?
Sue No. I haven't seen Tom today. I think he's out of town.

B Choose the correct question word to fill each blank:

won't it must it doesn't it is it can she

1. The child can't have gone far, _____?
2. The house isn't big enough, _____?
3. The garden takes up a lot of time, _____?
4. The job will be quite well paid, _____?
5. The decision mustn't be taken lightly, _____?

ANSWERS

PART 1

- 1 **A**
1. How 2. Whose 3. Where
4. Which 5. Who's

- B**
1. When does the train leave?
2. Whose bag is this?
3. When did the film finish?
4. When did you last see him?
5. Where did you find it?

- 2 **A**
1. What 2. How 3. What
4. Why 5. To whom

- B**
How are you?
How are you?
How is your sister?
How is your husband?
What's wrong with him?

- 3 **A**
1. When 2. Whenever
3. whom 4. Whereabouts
5. What

- B**
1. Who is that man?
2. Which dress suits me better?
3. How is Jack now?
4. What team does Bob play for?
5. What was the motive for the attack?

- 4 **A**
1. What's the weather forecast for today?
2. What kind of car does he have?
3. What would you like for Christmas?
4. What are you going to do when you leave school?
5. How do you make chocolate brownies?

- B**
Who cares?
Who says?
Why?
Why do you want to go to France?

- 5 **A**
1. How are you today?
2. Who is Anne?
3. Who did you complain to?
4. What time does the restaurant open?
5. How old were you when you emigrated to America?

- B**
Since when?
Where were you this morning?
What did it say?
What happened to Bob?

PART 2

- 1 **A**
1. Am 2. Has 3. Is
4. Had 5. Were

- B**
1. Does the dress fit?
2. Have you done this kind of work before?
3. Has it stopped raining?
4. Did the burglars leave fingerprints?
5. Was Tom at the party?

- 2 **A**
1. Are you OK?
2. Were you at work yesterday?
3. Do you know that part of the country well?
4. Are you going to buy a new car?
5. Does Tom have a regular job?

B

Did Sue and Bill put in an offer for the flat?
Has their offer been accepted?
Do you know why the offer hasn't been accepted yet?
Might their offer have been too low?
Does this mean that they won't get the flat?

3 A

1. Don't
2. Was
3. Do
4. Doesn't
5. Hasn't

B

1. Another coffee?
2. Coming?
3. Enough?
4. Know what I mean?
5. Time for a chat?

4 A

1. Have you booked a holiday yet?
2. Was there any sign of a break-in?
3. Do you know what I mean?
4. Were you surprised at not getting the job?
5. Weren't there any other people waiting for the last bus?

B

1. Will you have another biscuit?
Would you like another biscuit?
2. Are you going far?
3. Are you sure?
4. Have you had enough tea?
5. Do you take milk?

5 A

1. Haven't
2. Does
3. Has
4. Were
5. Isn't

B

1. Is it still snowing?
2. Will there be anything else?
3. Are you being served, girls?
4. I am a fool, am I not?
5. Have there been any muggings here?

PART 3

1 A

1. Shouldn't
2. Shall
3. Must
4. Can
5. Could

B

1. Would this sweater fit Jane?
2. Could you help me with my luggage, please/?
3. Can Sue ski?
4. Would you like a drink?
5. Must we wear school uniform tomorrow?

2 A

1. Can't
2. Will
3. Won't
4. Could
5. Should

B

Will Mary be able to see again after the operation?
Will they know soon?
Can we visit her?
Would it be OK to send her some flowers?
might she get upset if she can't see the flowers?

3 A

1. Shouldn't we have waited a bit longer for Jane?
2. Will you go to the meeting if you receive a personal invitation?
3. Would you have chosen that resort if you had known that it would be so hot there?
4. Should we send for a doctor?
5. Must you go now?

B

Can you repair the computer?
Will I have to get a new one?
Will you come and help me choose one?
Can you come tomorrow?
Will you meet me outside Technoworld at one o'clock?

4 A

1. would you rather have coffee?
2. Could the prisoner have escaped?
3. Couldn't Jim swim?
4. Couldn't he hear the police siren?

5. Should we call the police??

B

1. Would you like some water with the whisky?
2. Would you like to come?
3. Would you like some wine?
4. Would you rather have red or white wine?
5. Would you like to join us?

5

A

1. Can 2. Would 3. Must
4. Shall 1. Can

B

1. Might/Could 2. May/Can
3. Is ... able to/Can 4. Can/Might
5. Do ... have to/Must I

PART 4

1

A

1. Jane's not usually as late as this, is she?
2. You won't tell my parents I was out late, will you?
3. You'll come to the ball as my partner, won't you?
4. You don't know the new sales director, do you?
5. We should go home now, shouldn't we?

B

You weren't at the meeting, were you?
Wasn't Jack there either?
You heard what happened, didn't you?
No conclusion was reached, was it?
There's to be another meeting next week, isn't there?

2

A

1. haven't we? 2. do we?
3. shouldn't we? 4. couldn't it?
5. could it ?

B

1. You won't let me down, will you?
2. He has a well-paid job, doesn't he?
3. Tom asked you to marry him, didn't he?
4. You haven't done your Christmas shopping yet, have you?

5. You're going to the conference, aren't you?

3

A

1. shouldn't you? 2. should you?
3. will you? 4. isn't it?
5. aren't they?

B

You're going shopping tomorrow, aren't you? Let's go together, shall we?
You usually leave early, don't you?
Eight thirty is not too early, is it?
The shops should be empty at that time, shouldn't they?

4

A

1. You're not thinking of looking for another job, are you?
2. We could still catch the last bus, couldn't we?'
3. You're not still going out with Tom, are you?
4. Mark is Bob's brother, isn't he?
5. Tom bought your flat, didn't he?

B

1. would he? 2. wouldn't he?
3. couldn't you? 4. could you?
5. wasn't he?

5

A

1. You can ride a motor cycle, can't you?
2. You'll remember to give Anne the book, won't you?
3. You didn't get my message from Liz, did you?
4. Bob has a new girlfriend, hasn't he?
5. You haven't seen Tom today, have you?

B

1. can she 2. is it
3. doesn't it 4. won't it
5. must it

How to ask Questions

How to Ask Questions

is intended to help learners master social English so that they can readily engage in social communication.

The book explains clearly and concisely the formal and informal ways that you can ask questions in English. The explanations are supported by lots of example sentences to show how the question words are used. Reading passages in the form of dialogue are also included to illustrate usage in context.

Exercises are included for self-testing and an **Answer Key** is provided at the end of the book.

About the Author

Betty Kirkpatrick, a graduate of Edinburgh University, has had a long and distinguished career as editor, publisher and writer of English reference books. She was the editor of the Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary and the editor of Roget's Thesaurus.