## Grammar: Types of questions

## Wh questions (Question Words)

### Types of questions

There are two types of questions:

* [Yes or no questions](https://www.myenglishpages.com/site_php_files/grammar-lesson-yes-no-questions.php)
* Wh questions

### Question words

Question words are also called wh questions because they include the letters 'W' and 'H'.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Question words** | **Meaning** | **Examples** |
| **who** | person | Who's that? That's Nancy. |
| **where** | place | Where do you live? In Boston |
| **why** | reason | Why do you sleep early? Because I've got to get up early |
| **when** | time | When do you go to work? At 7:00 |
| **how** | manner | How do you go? By car |
| **what** | object, idea or action | What do you do? I am an engineer |
| **which** | choice | Which one do you prefer? The red one. |
| **whose** | possession | Whose is this book? It's Alan's. |
| **whom** | object of the verb | Whom did you meet? I met the manager. |
| **what kind** | description | What kind of music do you like? I like quiet songs |
| **what time** | time | What time did you come home? |
| **how many** | quantity (countable) | How many students are there? There are twenty. |
| **how much** | amount, price (uncountable) | How much time have we got? Ten minutes |
| **how long** | duration, length | How long did you stay in that hotel? For two weeks. |
| **how often** | frequency | How often do you go to the gym? Twice a week. |
| **how far** | distance | How far is your school? It's one mile far. |
| **how old** | age | How old are you? I'm 16. |
| **how come** | reason | How come I didn't see you at the party? |

### Asking questions

1. If you ask about the subject of the sentence, simply add the question word at the beginning:

Example:  
**James** writes good poems. — **Who** writes good poems?

1. If you ask about the predicate of the sentence (the part of a sentence which contains the verb and gives information about the subject), there are three options:

* If there is a helping (auxiliary) verb that precedes the main verb ( for example: can, is, are, was, were, will, would...), add the question word and invert the subject and the helping (auxiliary) verb.  
  Examples:  
  He can speak **Chinese**. — **What** can he speak?  
  They are leaving **tonight**. — **When** are they leaving?
* If you ask about the predicate and there is no helping (auxiliary) verb and the verb is "to be", simply add the question word and invert the subject and the verb.  
  Example:  
  The play was **interesting**. — **How** was the play?
* If there is no helping (auxiliary) verb in the the predicate and the main verb is not "to be", add the auxiliary "do" in the appropriate form.  
  Examples:  
  They go to **the movies** every Saturday. — **Where** do they go every Saturday?  
  He wakes up **early**. — **When** does he wake up?  
  They sent **a letter**. — **What** did they send?

### Yes-no questions :

Yes or no questions are questions whose expected answer is either "yes" or "no".

#### How to form yes-no questions

In English, a special word order (Verb Subject Object) is used to form yes-no questions.

Examples:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Affirmative** | **Yes or No Question** |
| They are American | Are they American? |
| She is nice | Is she nice? |

##### **The rules**

1. If the main verb of the sentence is "to be", simply invert the subject and the verb to be:

Examples:

* They are American. — Are they American?
* They are nice. — Are they nice?

2. If the sentence includes a main verb and another or other helping (auxiliary) verb(s), invert the subject and the (first) helping (auxiliary) verb.

Examples:

* They are visiting Paris. — Are they visiting Paris?
* She has done the housework. — Has she done the housework
* Nancy has been working all night long. — Has Nancy been working all night long?
* He will be reading the book. — Will he be reading the book?

3. If the sentence includes a verb which is not the verb "to be" and doesn't include a helping (auxiliary) verb, the transformation is more complex.

a. If the verb is in the present tense, add either **do** or **does** and put the main verb in its base form:

* **do** if the subject is the first person singular, second person singular, first person plural, second person plural and third person plural (I, you, we, they)  
  Examples:  
  I like apples. — **Do** you like apples?  
  They go to a high school. — **Do** they go to a high school?
* **does** if the subject is the third person singular (he, she, it).  
  Examples:  
  Nancy reads a lot. — **Does** Nancy read a lot?  
  He hates basketball. — **Does** he hate basketball?

b.If the verb is in the past tense, add **did** and put the main verb in its base form:

Examples:

* He discovered the truth. — **Did** he discover the truth?
* She wrote a nice essay. — **Did** she write a nice essay?
* They did the homework. — **Did** they do the homework?