

WORD ORDER IN QUESTIONS

Main theme addressed	In this lesson, you will learn about word order in questions.
Key Goals	Here is an outline of what you will learn today: 1. Questions with question words 2. Questions without question words <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When the affirmative sentence has an auxiliary• Use of the auxiliary “do”• - When the main verb is “to be”

1. Questions with question words

Questions that start with a question word are called “wh- questions” or open questions.

After the question word, we usually put the auxiliary “do”.

question word + auxiliary verb + subject + main verb

However, when the main verb of the question is “be”, we put it right after the question word.

question word + be + subject

Examples:

Question words	Use	Examples
What	subject or object	What do you think?
When	point in time	When were you born?
Why	reason	Why are you sad?
How	manner	How are you?
Where	place	Where do you live?

You can also add an **adjective or adverb** after the question word “**how**” to ask for specific information indicating age, distance, frequency, dimensions, etc.

Examples:

Age	How old are you?
Distance	How far is your house?
Frequency	How often do you exercise?
Dimensions	How deep is the water?

To ask for a quantity or price, there is an additional rule to remember:

You will use “**How + much**” when you refer to an **uncountable** noun.

You will use “**How + many**” when you refer to a **countable** noun.

Examples:

How much (money) does that table cost?

How many people are there in your classroom?

Note: When the question word “Who” or “What” is also the subject of the question, we will not use an auxiliary verb.

Examples:

Who is your best friend?

What is your name?

Exercise:

Ask the correct questions to get the following answers.

1. _____ ?

- I play video games **every day**.

2. _____ ?

- I am happy **because tomorrow’s Saturday**.

3. _____ ?

- My family is coming to visit **on Tuesday**.

Answers:

1. How often do you play video games?
2. Why are you happy?
3. When is my family coming to visit?

2. Questions without question words

As you saw at the beginning of this lesson, closed questions can only be answered by yes or no.

There are several ways of asking a closed question:

a) When the affirmative sentence has an auxiliary

Each interrogative sentence has an affirmative form. When the affirmative sentence has an auxiliary, we will put it at the beginning of the question.

This auxiliary can be used to build the **passive**, a **tense** or as a **modal** auxiliary.

The structure of the question will be as follows:

auxiliary + subject + main verb
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Examples	Type of auxiliary
Would you like some tea?	Modal
Can you please open the window?	Modal
Have you ever been to England?	Present Perfect
Is this sauce made with tomato	Passive

b) Use of the auxiliary “do”

When asking a closed question, the affirmative version of the sentence might not have an auxiliary. This means that we will use the auxiliary “**do**” in the question.

The structure of these closed questions is as follows:

do + subject + main verb

Example:

Do you like action movies?

- Yes, I love them!

c) When the main verb is “to be”

When the main verb of the question is the verb “to be”, we will put it at the beginning of the question.

The structure of the question will be as follows:

“be” + subject

Example:

Are you an organized person?

Exercise:

Ask the correct questions to get the following answers.

a) _____ ?

- Yes, I really like pop music.

b) _____ ?

- No, I am not married.

c) _____ ?

- Yes, I would like to go on holiday with you!

Answers:

1. Do you like pop music?
2. Are you married?
3. Would you like to go on holiday with me/us?

Learn More:

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar/beginner-to-pre-intermediate/question-forms>

<https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/grammar/frage.htm>

https://elt.oup.com/student/englishfile/beginner/a_grammar/file04/grammar04_b01?c=c=gb&selLanguage=en