

## WORD ORDER IN QUESTIONS

<b>Main theme addressed</b>	In this lesson, you will learn about word order in questions.
<b>Key Goals</b>	<p>Here is an outline of what you will learn today:</p> <p><b>1. Negative questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of negative questions</li> <li>• Structure of negative questions</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Embedded questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of embedded questions</li> <li>• Question within a question</li> <li>• - Question within a statement</li> </ul>

### 1. Negative Questions

#### USES OF NEGATIVE QUESTIONS

Negative questions can be used for different purposes:

a) To ask for confirmation about something that you believe is true.

Example:

Didn't you go to Paris yesterday? How was it?

b) To ask for confirmation about something negative, the speaker wants to express their surprise about something.

Example:

Hasn't he told you that he's moving to Australia?

c) To politely express an opinion.

Example:

Wouldn't it be nice to have a pool here?

d) To make a polite offer to someone. In this case we will mostly use “wouldn't you”, “why don't you” and “won't you”.

Examples:

You'll help your friend with her homework, won't you?

Why don't you stay here and watch your sister?

Wouldn't you like something to eat?

## STRUCTURE OF NEGATIVE QUESTIONS

To build a negative question, we use the same structure as with positive questions. We add “**not**” to the auxiliary or to the verb “be”. It is very common to use the contracted form.

For open questions with an auxiliary, the structure is:

**question word + auxiliary + not + subject + main verb**

Example:

Why don't you like ice cream?

For questions with the main verb “to be”, the structure is:

**(question word) + be + not + subject**

Example:

(Why) Aren't you happy to see me?

For closed questions with an auxiliary, the structure is:

**auxiliary + not + subject + main verb**

Examples:

Doesn't she understand?

Wouldn't you like to be his friend?

**Exercise:**

**Form negative questions based on the following statements:**

1. Confirm: There is a party tomorrow night.

\_\_\_\_\_ ?

2. Ask John: He wants some more tea.

\_\_\_\_\_ ?

3. Negative surprise: Your friend hasn't arrived yet.

\_\_\_\_\_ ?

4. Opinion: It would be awesome to meet Johnny Depp.

\_\_\_\_\_ ?

## 2. Embedded Questions

Embedded questions are those that are said within another sentence (statement or question). You can find embedded questions in different situations.

### USES OF EMBEDDED QUESTIONS

#### a) Politeness

If you want to be more polite or ask a question a little less directly, you can embed it in another question or statement.

Example:

Could you please tell me **when the train leaves?**

#### b) Asking for more information

When you want to ask for more information, you can use embedded questions.

Examples:

I don't remember **where I put my phone.** (lack of knowledge)

I would like to know **where she's going.** (desire for knowledge)

#### c) Reported Speech

In Reported speech you can tell someone about a question someone else has asked.

Example:

She asked **if she could come with us.**

## STRUCTURE OF EMBEDDED QUESTIONS

### a) Question within a question

You will sometimes find a question within another question.

Question 1	Question 2	Question 1+2
Do you know	Where <b>can I find</b> a doctor	Do you know where <b>I can find</b> a doctor?
Do you think	<b>Can we work</b> together on this project?	Do you think <b>we can work</b> together on this project?

Here is what we can observe:

- Question 2 is embedded in question 1
- Question 2 adopts the **structure** of an **affirmative sentence**
- Question 1+2 has a typical question's structure:
- **Auxiliary + subject + main verb + object**
- Question 2 becomes the **object** of question 3

### b) Question within a statement

Sometimes, you will also use questions within statements.

Statement	Question	Statement + Question
I'm not sure	<b>Can I go out</b> tonight?	I am not sure if <b>I can go out</b> tonight.
She wants to know	<b>When are we going to</b> London?	She wants to know <b>when we are going to</b> London.

We can make the same observations here. The question will adopt the **structure** of an **affirmative sentence** when it is embedded in a **statement**.

**Exercise:**

**Gather the following elements in one sentence:**

- a) 1: I would like to know  
2: Do you have any allergies?
- 

- b) 1: Who knows  
2: What does she want for her birthday?
- 

- c) 1: My father asked me  
2: Are you a vegetarian?
- 

**Learn More:**

<https://linguapress.com/grammar/question-structure.htm>

<https://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/word-order/questions>

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