

WORD ORDER IN QUESTIONS

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

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.

_____ ?

Answers:

1. Isn't there a party tomorrow night?
2. Wouldn't you like some more tea?
3. Hasn't my friend arrived yet?
4. Wouldn't it 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 can I find a doctor	Do you know where I can find a doctor?
Do you think	Can we work together on this project?	Do you think we can work 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	Can I go out tonight?	I am not sure if I can go out tonight.
She wants to know	When are we going to London?	She wants to know when we are going to 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?
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Answers:

- a) I would like to know if you have any allergies.
b) Who knows what she wants for her birthday.
c) My father asked me if I am 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>