

TAG QUESTIONS

- (a) Jack *can* come, *can't* he?
(b) Fred *can't* come, *can* he?

A tag question is a question added at the end of a sentence. Speakers use tag questions chiefly to make sure their information is correct or to seek agreement.*

AFFIRMATIVE SENTENCE + NEGATIVE TAG → AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER EXPECTED

Mary *is* here, *isn't* she? Yes, she is.
You *like* tea, *don't* you? Yes, I do.
They *have left*, *haven't* they? Yes, they have.

NEGATIVE SENTENCE + AFFIRMATIVE TAG → NEGATIVE ANSWER EXPECTED

Mary *isn't* here, *is* she? No, she isn't.
You *don't like* tea, *do* you? No, I don't.
They *haven't left*, *have* they? No, they haven't.

- (c) *This/That* is your book, *isn't it*?
These/Those are yours, *aren't they*?

The tag pronoun for *this/that* = *it*.
The tag pronoun for *these/those* = *they*.

- (d) *There is* a meeting tonight, *isn't there*?

In sentences with *there + be*, *there* is used in the tag.

- (e) *Everything* is okay, *isn't it*?
(f) *Everyone* took the test, *didn't they*?

Personal pronouns are used to refer to indefinite pronouns. *They* is usually used in a tag to refer to *everyone, everybody, someone, somebody, no one, nobody*.

- (g) *Nothing is* wrong, *is it*?
(h) *Nobody called* on the phone, *did they*?
(i) You've *never been* there, *have you*?

Sentences with negative words take affirmative tags.

- (j) *I am* supposed to be here, *am I not*?
(k) *I am* supposed to be here, *aren't I*?

In (j): *am I not*? is formal English.
In (k): *aren't I*? is common in spoken English.

A. Type the best tag ending in each item.

- Mathew is a good student, _____?
- She can speak Italian well, _____?
- I'm too fat, _____?
- This is your car, _____?
- There are a lot of people in your company, _____?
- They are your good friends, _____?
- You always buy your clothes at Central, _____?
- Isabel speaks Chinese well, _____?
- They would listen to us, _____?
- John won't be back before noon, _____?
- I am invited, _____?
- There is something wrong with Jane today, _____?
- Everyone can learn how to swim, _____?
- Nobody cheated on the exam, _____?
- Nothing went wrong while I was gone, _____?
- Those aren't Tony's books, _____?
- Peggy would like to come with us to the party, _____?
- This grammar is easy, _____?
- There aren't any problems, _____?
- That's your umbrella, _____?