



Presentation

You can ask questions in a more polite and less direct way by introducing them with certain expressions.

Does the museum have a café? → Could you tell me if the museum has a café?

Common expressions include:

- *Could you / anyone tell me ...?*
- *Do you know / remember / think ...?*
- *Do you mind if ...?*
- *Would you mind telling me ...?*
- *I wonder ... / I was wondering ...*

After the expressions, you can use ...

- *wh-/how* questions:

*Do you know **what time** the bus comes?*

*Do you know **how old** it is?*

- *if/whether* with *yes/no* questions:

*Could you tell me **if** the museum has a café?*

*I was wondering **whether** I could have a look at your programme.*

Word order

When you ask questions in this way, the word order is the same as an affirmative sentence. You do not need an auxiliary verb (*do, does, did*) in the present simple or past simple. The subject comes before the verb.

*Do you know **what time does** the bus comes.*

TIP You often start a conversation by asking the question indirectly and then continue with direct questions:

A: *Excuse me, **could you tell me if** the museum **has a** café?*

B: *Yes. It's downstairs.*

A: *Oh, thanks. **What time does** it close?*

Exercises

1 Put the words in the correct order.

1 the you tell could station is me train where

?

2 do film you the when starts know

?

3 it's closing could why you tell me early

.

4 the long journey you remember do how takes

?

5 can how tell you are me old you

?

6 Joel don't whether is I coming know too

.

2 Rewrite the direct questions as indirect questions.

1 When does the supermarket close?

Could you tell me when the supermarket
closes?

4 Do they accept credit cards?

Do you know

?

2 Is there another flight to Rome this evening?

Do you know

5 Where can I buy a newspaper?

Could you tell me

.

3 How long does this film last?

Would you mind telling me

?

6 Would your cousins enjoy this kind of music?

Do you know

?

3 Write an indirect question for each situation. Use the words in bold.

Situation 1: You are at the train station. You want to buy your ticket. Ask another person.

Do / know / where / can buy a ticket

Situation 2: You are looking for the departure lounge at an airport. Ask at the information desk.

Could / tell / where

Situation 3: You missed your last English lesson. Ask another student about the homework.

Do / know / we had homework?

Situation 4: You are on a tour of a palace. You want to know more about a painting. Ask the tour guide.

Can / tell / me more about