

What type of boss do you work for? Tick one.

Type 1: My boss always needs it now!

'Haven't you finished it yet? Hurry up!'

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Type 2: My boss needs it today.

'Sorry, but can I ask you if you've finished it yet?'

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Type 3: My boss needs it sometime this week (or next).

'You haven't finished it? No problem.'

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Presentation

Negative questions

You can ask questions using the negative form of the verb:

Haven't you finished it yet?

You often use negative questions to:

- show surprise or annoyance: **Haven't** you finished it yet? You've been working on that report for hours.
- suggest something: Why **don't** you work late tonight?
- request something (often impolite or expecting a negative response): **Can't** I finish it later?
- check information or something you think is probably true: **Isn't** the deadline for this report next Friday?
- exclaim something: **Don't** you work long hours!

When you use negative question forms for exclamations, you use an exclamation mark (!) not a question mark (?).

Indirect ways of asking questions

You can use certain expressions to make questions less direct. They often make the questions more polite or more tentative:

Have you finished it yet? → **Can I ask you if** you've finished it yet? (more polite and less direct)

Common expressions to ask a question indirectly:
Can/Could I ask you if...? Can/Could you/anyone tell me ...? Do you know/remember ...? Do you have any idea ...? I don't know/'d like to know ... I wonder/was wondering ...

After the expression, the word order is the same as an affirmative sentence (subject before the verb):

*I was wondering if **you've finished it yet**.* (not *I was wondering if ~~have you~~ finished it yet.*)

With yes/no questions, use *if/whether*:

*Can I ask you **if/whether** you've finished it yet?*

With object questions, do not use an auxiliary verb (*do, does, did*) in the present simple or past simple:

*Do you have any idea what time **she wants** the report?* (not *Do you have any idea what time ~~does she want~~ the report?*)

Statements as questions

You can make an affirmative sentence into a question by using rising intonation at the end. This type of question often shows surprise or checks information:

[↗]
You haven't finished it? What have you been doing?
(= This has taken longer than I expected.)

[↗]
A: *The office is open on Saturday?* (= I'm fairly certain, but I want to check.)

B: *That's right, but only until midday.*

Exercises

1 Put these words in the correct order to make questions or statements.

- 1 done he a hasn't good job
Hasn't he done a good job _____ ?
- 2 come you I with can't _____ ?
- 3 they take a break soon won't _____ ?
- 4 they how expensive know don't this is _____ ?
- 5 Phillip me can you tell where is _____ ?
- 6 you think will like Marilyn do our idea _____ ?
- 7 know mistakes how I made so many I don't _____ ?
- 8 idea you have are coming do any how many people _____ ?

2 Match a statement as a question (1-6) to the questions (A-F).

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 You've left your job? _____ | A What is it now? |
| 2 They've changed the password? _____ | B So who's in charge? |
| 3 It's this afternoon? _____ | C What will you do instead? |
| 4 Your car's broken down again? _____ | D Do you think they all received one? |
| 5 No one's replied to our invitations? _____ | E Wasn't it in the garage only last week? |
| 6 The boss is on holiday? _____ | F Why did I need to get up so early then? |

3 Read the first sentence or question. Rewrite each to ask the question indirectly, or form a negative question, or make a statement as a question.

- 1 Have you talked to your boss about the problem? It would be a good idea to.
Why _____ about the problem?
- 2 Is it OK if I take the rest of the day off?
Can't _____ of the day off?
- 3 I thought today's lesson was cancelled.
Isn't _____ cancelled?
- 4 How much are potatoes this week?
I'd like to know _____ this week?
- 5 Aren't they coming? Why not?
They _____ ? Why not?
- 6 I need you to help me move these books.
Could you _____ these books, please?
- 7 How long has Gabriel been playing that computer game?
Do you have any idea _____ that computer game?
- 8 Do you spell his surname C-H-U-I?
You _____ ?