

QUESTION TAGS

We often use question tags when we expect the listener to agree with our statement. In this case, when the statement is positive, we use a negative question tag. If the statement is negative, we use a positive question tag.

Form Auxiliary verb+ sub pronoun

If there is an **auxiliary verb** in the statement, we use it to form the question tag.

1) Verb to be (am-is -are- was -were)

If the main verb or auxiliary verb in the statement is **am**, the positive question tag is am I? but the negative question tag is usually **aren't I?**:

Positive sentence+ negative tag

- I am a doctor, am I not?
- I'm going to get an email with the details, aren't I?
- It's a nice day, isn't it?
- James is working on that, isn't he?
- The bus stop's over there, isn't it?
- They are British, aren't they?
- There was a lot of traffic, wasn't there?
- Yesterday was so much fun, wasn't it?

Negative sentence+ positive tag

- I am not a teacher, am I?
- I'm never on time, am I?
- She isn't a nurse, is she?
- He isn't here, is he?
- We aren't happy, are we?
- The trains are never on time, are they?
- It was raining that day, wasn't it?
- They weren't in London, were they?
- None of those customers were happy, were they?

2) Present simple (Do/does) Past simple (did)

When the verb in the statement is **present simple** or **past simple** and is positive. Here we use **don't**, **doesn't** or **didn't**:

Positive sentence+ negative tag

- Ali likes English, doesn't he?
- Jenni eats cheese, doesn't she?
- You have a car, don't you?
- She has long hair, doesn't she?
- You like fish, don't you?
- She looked for the book, didn't she?
- I said that already, didn't I?

Negative sentence+ positive tag

- He doesn't have a car, does he?
- They don't play tennis, do they?
- I don't need to finish this today, do I?
- You don't have a car, do you?
- She doesn't have blue eyes, does she?
- He didn't do the homework, did he?
- The phone didn't ring, did it?

3) Modal Verb (can/will/would should/could/ must)etc

... the verb in the statement is a modal verb. Here we use the modal verb to make the question tag:

Positive sentence+ negative tag

- *Ali will be here soon, won't he?
- *She should pass the exam, shouldn't She?
- *We can climb the tree, can't we?
- * He could answer, couldn't he?
- *We must study hard, mustn't we?
- *They could hear me, couldn't they?

Negative sentence+ positive tag

- *They can't jump, can they?
- *You shouldn't stay up late, should you?
- *It won't rain, will it?
- *Soha couldn't answer, could she?
- *We mustn't swim in canals, must we?
- *You won't tell anyone, will you?

4) Have/ has/ had

Positive sentence+ negative tag

- *He has got a car, hasn't he?
- *I have done the homework, haven't I?
- *He had met her before, hadn't he?
- *Your parents have retired, haven't they?

Negative sentence+ positive tag

- *Nobody has called for me, have they?
- *She hasn't seen the film, has she?
- *We haven't got a car, have we?
- *I had never seen him before, had I ?
- *Your mum hadn't met him before, had she?

Note:

- ***Let's go** to the cinema, **shall we**?
- ***Don't open** the door, **will you**?
- ***Open** the window, **won't you**?

1) Read the conversation below, and use question tags to complete the gaps. Then listen and check your ideas.

Voice 1: Your mother's looking older these days, (1) _____?

Voice 2: I don't think so, but you're being very rude today, (2) _____?

Voice 1: I see your team won the game on Thursday, (3) _____?

Voice 2: Yes, it was a good match.

Voice 1: They must be top of the league now, (4) _____?

Voice 1: You will remember to book a table, (5) _____? It's very important.

Voice 2: I couldn't forget, (6) _____?

Voice 1: You didn't forget the exam this morning, (7) _____? You got up very late.

Voice 2: You are joking, (8), _____?

Student 1: These question tags are difficult, (9) _____?

Student 2: We use them a lot in English, though, (10) _____?