

## UNIT 7

### Indirect questions

(embedded questions / impersonal questions)

➤ **The function:**

To ask questions in a polite, formal way.

➤ We can begin impersonal questions with

*Could you tell me .....?*

*Do you know ...?*

*Do you mind telling me ...?*

*Could you explain ....?*

### 'Yes / No' Questions

To make an indirect 'yes / no' question, we use *if* or *whether* and the word order of a normal positive sentence. This is the same as for reported 'yes / no' questions. On the other hand, we don't usually need to 'backshift' (change the tense of the verb) as we do with reported questions.

Of course, most tenses make questions by using 'inversion' (changing the word order). To change from a direct 'yes / no' question with inversion to an indirect question, you add *if* or *whether* and change the word order back to a normal positive sentence. You don't need to use inversion. **Do not forget to write a question mark.**

e.g. Do you know *if/whether* there's a postbox near here, please?

**'Yes / no' questions for tenses with inversion:**

Verb Tense	Direct Question	Indirect Question
Present simple with 'be'	Is he Spanish?	Could you tell me if he is Spanish?
Present continuous	Is the restaurant closing now?	Could you tell me if the restaurant is closing now?
Past simple with 'be'	Was he late for the meeting?	Could you tell me if he was late for the meeting?
Past continuous	Were you watching TV at 3pm?	Could you tell me if you were watching TV at 3pm?
Present perfect	Has Lucy been to Mexico?	Could you tell me if Lucy has been to Mexico?
Present perfect continuous	Has she been living here long?	Could you tell me if she has been living here long?
Past perfect	Had she found this job when she moved here?	Could you tell me if she had found this job when she moved here?
Past perfect continuous	Had she been living here long when she met you?	Could you tell me if she had been living here long when she met you?
Future simple with 'will'	Will she start her new job next week?	Could you tell me if she will start her new job next week?
Future simple with 'going to'	Is it going to rain later?	Could you tell me if it is going to rain later?
Future continuous	Will Lisa be meeting the boss later?	Could you tell me if Lisa will be meeting the boss later?
Future perfect	Will he have finished the report by tonight?	Could you tell me if he will have finished the report by tonight?
Future perfect continuous	Will he have been studying French for twenty years when he retires?	Could you tell me if he will have been studying French for twenty years when he retires?
Modal verbs	Should we start now?	Could you tell me if we should start now?

### Yes / no' questions with 'do / does / did':

Questions that begin with 'do, does, or did', we delete 'do, does, or did' then we use *if* or *whether*. Here, we do not have to change the word order only pay attention to subject -verb agreement.

Verb Tense	Direct Question	Indirect Question
Present simple with any verb except 'be'	Does David <u>live</u> in London?	Could you tell me if David <u>lives</u> in London?
Past simple with any verb except 'be'	Did Amanda <u>call</u> John yesterday?	Could you tell me if Amanda <u>called</u> John yesterday?

## 'Wh' Questions

In the same way as with reported 'wh' questions, we use the question word such as *what, who, why, when, where, how, etc.* and the word order of a normal positive sentence to make indirect 'wh' questions. We don't need to use inversion. Again, we also don't usually need to 'backshift' (change the tense of the verb) as we do with reported questions.

e.g. Could you tell me what the time is, please?

Do you know who that man is?

Do you mind telling me why the train is late?

Could you tell me where the nearest bank is, please?

Could you explain how you solved this puzzle?

### 'Wh' questions for tenses with inversion:

Verb Tense	Direct Question	Indirect Question
Present simple with 'be'	Why is he unhappy?	Could you tell me why he is unhappy?
Present continuous	When is the restaurant closing?	Could you tell me when the restaurant is closing?
Past simple with 'be'	Why was he late for the meeting?	Could you tell me why he was late for the meeting?
Past continuous	What were you doing at 3pm?	Could you tell me what you were doing at 3pm?
Present perfect	Where has Lucy?	Could you tell me where Lucy has been?
Present perfect continuous	How long has she been living here?	Could you tell me how long she has been living here?
Past perfect	Why had she quit her job before she moved here?	Could you tell me why she had quit her job before she moved here?

Past perfect continuous	How long had she been living here when she met you?	Could you tell me how long she had been living here when she met you?
Future simple with 'will'	When will she start her new job?	Could you tell me when she will start her new job?
Future simple with 'going to'	When is it going to rain?	Could you tell me when it is going to rain?
Future continuous	What time will Lisa be meeting the boss?	Could you tell me what time Lisa will be meeting the boss?
Future perfect	When will he have finished the report?	Could you tell me when he will have finished the report?
Future perfect continuous	How long will he have been studying French when he retires?	Could you tell me how long he will have been studying French when he retires?
Modal verbs	What should we do now?	Could you tell me what we should do now?

### 'Wh' questions with 'do / does / did'

Questions that begin with 'do, does, or did'. However, when we want to make indirect 'wh' questions using these questions, we don't need 'do, does, or did'. Instead, we use a question word and we do not have to change the word order only pay attention to subject – verb agreement.

Verb Tense	Direct Question	Indirect Question
Present simple with any verb except 'be'	Where does David live?	Could you tell me where David <u>lives</u> ?
Past simple with any verb except 'be'	Why did Amanda call John yesterday?	Could you tell me why Amanda <u>called</u> John yesterday?



**Question** : Rewrite the following sentences so that each new sentence has similar meaning to the one before it.

1 Where's the station?

Could you tell me \_\_\_\_\_

2 Are you coming to the party?

Do you mind telling me \_\_\_\_\_

3 How does it work?

Could you explain \_\_\_\_\_

4 What's the matter?

Could you explain \_\_\_\_\_

5 Where are you from?

Could you tell me \_\_\_\_\_

6 How long does it take to get there?

Do you know \_\_\_\_\_

7 Has she reached a decision yet?

Do you mind telling me \_\_\_\_\_

8 What time are you leaving?

Do you know \_\_\_\_\_

9 Does Annie know about computers?

Could you tell me \_\_\_\_\_

10 Excuse me. How do you get to the post office from here?

Could you tell us \_\_\_\_\_

11 What are you doing?

Do you mind telling me \_\_\_\_\_

12 Could you lend me 50 Euros?

Do you mind \_\_\_\_\_

13 Could you take me to the airport?

Do you mind \_\_\_\_\_

14 Does Susana like classical music?

Could you tell me \_\_\_\_\_

- 6 -

15. Can you suggest a healthy breakfast?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ suggesting \_\_\_\_\_ ?
16. Please help me to plan my revision.  
 Do you mind \_\_\_\_\_ ?
17. How can I relax?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ you explain \_\_\_\_\_ ?
18. Are we allowed to eat sweets during the exam?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ you know \_\_\_\_\_ ?
19. Please tell me where you found that information.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ mind \_\_\_\_\_ ?
20. Does the exam start at ten or half past ten?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ whether \_\_\_\_\_ ?

\* Note: ممكن أن يأتي تحويل عكسي من غير مباشر إلى مباشر

في هذه الحالة نحذف مقدمة السؤال و نعيد الفعل المساعد قبل الفاعل و إذا لم يوجد فعل مساعد نعيد استخدام

(do/does/did)

21. Do you mind telling me where the library is?

Where \_\_\_\_\_

22. Could you explain why you left early yesterday?

Why \_\_\_\_\_

23. Do you know when the manager will arrive?

When \_\_\_\_\_

24. Could you tell me if Ali lives in Amman?

Does \_\_\_\_\_

25. Could you tell me whether the exam was difficult or not?

Was \_\_\_\_\_

26. Do you know if they have finished their exams?

Have \_\_\_\_\_

27. Do you mind telling me if you saw the accident?

Did \_\_\_\_\_

# Indirect Questions

2016/ كتاب جديد /مستوى رابع /شتوية

How can I get to Queen Alia Airport by public transport?

Could you tell me.....?

how I can get to Queen Alia Airport by public transport?

2016/ كتاب جديد /مستوى رابع /صيفية

Is there a connection between the amount of TV people watch and how fit they are?

Do you know.....?

Do you know if/ whether there is a connection between the amount of TV people watch and how fit they are?

2017/ كتاب جديد /مستوى رابع /شتوية

Are students allowed to navigate the Internet during the open exam?

Do you know.....?

Do you know if/ whether students are allowed to navigate the Internet during the open exam?

2017/ كتاب جديد /مستوى رابع /صيفية

Does the bell ring at eight or half past eight?

Do you know.....?

Do you know if/ whether the bell rings at eight or half past eight?

2018/ كتاب جديد /مستوى رابع /شتوية

"What can't we bring onto the plane?"

Could you tell me.....?

Could you tell me what we can't bring onto the plane?

2018/ كتاب جديد /مستوى رابع /صيفية

How can I fix this smartphone?

Could you tell me.....?

SB-80-4:3: Complete the second sentence so that it has the same meaning as the first.

3. Where does the bus go from, please?

Could.....from?

3 you tell me where the bus goes

WB-55-7:1: Complete the sentences so that they mean the same as the ones above them.

1. Where's the post office, please?

Do you mind.....?

telling me where the post office is