

IES GALILEO GALILEI.

QUESTION TAGS

A. Study these examples:

You haven't seen Mary today, **have you?**.- No, I'm afraid not.

It was a good film, **wasn't it?**.- Yes. I really enjoyed it.

Have you? and wasn't it? are question tags

* 'Karen plays the piano, **doesn't she?**' 'Well, yes, but not very well.'

* 'You didn't lock the door, **did you?**' 'No, I forgot.'

B. Normally we use a negative question tag after a positive sentence:

positive sentence + negative tag

Mary will be here soon, **won't she?**

There was a lot of traffic, **wasn't there?**

Jim should pass the exam, **shouldn't he?**

... **and a positive question tag after a negative sentence:**

negative sentence + positive tag

Mary won't be late, **will she?**

They don't like us, **do they?**

You haven't got a car, **have you?**

C. The meaning of a question tag depends on how you say it.

If your voice goes down, you aren't really asking a question; you are only inviting the listener to agree with you:

* 'It's a nice day, **isn't it?**' 'Yes, lovely.'

* 'Tim doesn't look well today, **does he?**' 'No, he looks very tired.'

* 'She's very pretty. She's got beautiful eyes, **hasn't she?**

But if the voice goes up, it is a real question:

* 'You haven't seen Mary today, **have you?**' 'No, I'm afraid not.'

(= Have you seen Mary today by any chance?)

We often use a negative sentence + positive tag to ask for things or information, or to ask somebody to do something. The voice goes up at the end of the tag in sentences like these:

* 'You haven't got a pen, **have you?**' 'Yes, here you are.'

* 'You couldn't do me a favour, **could you?**' 'It depends what it is.'

* 'You don't know where Karen is, **do you?**' 'Sorry, I've no idea.'

D. After Let's... the question tag is ... shall we?:

Let's go for a walk, **shall we?**

After the imperative (Do.../Don't do... etc.), the tag is usually ... will you?:

Open the door, **will you?** Don't be late, **will you?**

Note that we say ... aren't I? (= am I not?): I'm late, **aren't I?**

EXERCISES.- Put a question tag on the end of these sentences.

1. Tom won't be late,? No, he's never late.
2. You're tired,? Yes, a little.
3. You've got a camera,? Yes, why? Do you want to borrow it?
4. You weren't listening,? Yes, I was!
5. Sue doesn't know Ann,? No, they've never met.
6. Jack's on holiday,? Yes, he's in Portugal.
7. Ann's applied for the job,? Yes, but she won't get it.
8. You can speak German,? Yes, but not very fluently.
9. He won't mind if I use his phone,? No, of course he won't.
10. There are a lot of people here,? Yes, more than I expected.
11. Let's go out tonight,? Yes, let's do it
12. This isn't very interesting,? No, not very.
13. I'm too impatient,? Yes, you are sometimes.
14. You wouldn't tell anyone? No, of course not.
15. Listen,? OK, I'm listening.
16. I shouldn't have lost my temper,? No, but never mind.
17. Don't drop that vase,? No, don't worry.
18. He'd never met her before,? No, that was the first time.