

Grammar Notes

WH- QUESTIONS

A. Introduction

Questions are a common part of conversations in English. It is important to learn how to ask and answer different types of questions.

There are two main types of questions:

- Yes/No Questions (e.g., *Do you like pizza?*)
- Wh- Questions (e.g., *What kind of pizza do you like?*)

Key		
Symbol	Part of Speech	Meaning
Wh-	Wh- word	a question word (<i>who, what, where, when, etc.</i>)
Aux	Auxiliary verb	a word that "helps" the main verb (<i>do, be, have, will, can, etc.</i>)
S	Subject	the person or thing doing the action
V	Verb	the action
O	Object	the person or thing receiving the action

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B. Wh- Questions

Wh- questions are very common in English.
We use Wh- words to ask about a person, place, time, etc.

Wh- words begin with the letters "wh" (e.g., **who**, **where**, **when**, etc.).
The only Wh- word that doesn't begin with those letters is **how**.

Answers are usually complete sentences
that focus on the Wh- word from the question.

1. Wh- Questions with Be

The usual Wh- question pattern with the Be verb is:

Wh- word + V + S (+O)

Wh- Word	Use	Example Question	Example Answer
Who	person	Who is the man in the blue shirt?	He's our new teacher.
What	thing	What is that?	It's a new game.
Where	place	Where is your school?	My school is on Smith Street.
When	time	When is your birthday?	It's April 25.
Why	reason	Why are they late?	They are late because they slept in this morning.
How	method/way	How is your new car?	It is very fast.
Which	choice	Which is better, the cake or the pie?	The cake is better than the pie.
Whose	possession	Whose jacket is this?	It's Mike's jacket.



Grammar Notes cont.

B. Wh- Questions cont.

2. Wh- Questions with All Other Verbs

For all other verbs besides the Be verb, the Wh- question pattern is:

Wh- word + Aux + S + V (+O)

Wh- Word	Use	Example Question	Example Answer
Who	person	Who are you talking to now?	I'm talking to my boyfriend.
What	thing	What did Wendy do last weekend?	She went to a party.
Where	place	Where do they live?	They live on Johnson Street.
When	time	When do you need this report?	I need it by 5:00 pm.
Why	reason	Why did you quit your job?	I quit because it was too stressful.
How	method/way	How can we fix this?	We can call a plumber.
Which	choice	Which does he prefer, horror movies or comedies?	He prefers comedies.
Whose	possession	Whose sunglasses did you borrow?	I borrowed my brother's sunglasses.

Did You Know?

The verbs in Wh- Questions can be in any tense. Which tenses are used in each of the examples above: the *simple present*, *present progressive*, or *simple past*?