Asking Questions in English

How do we make the sentence 'She is reading a book.' a question?

 (Is she reading a book?).

 Then try: 'She likes tea.'

Can we just invert 'likes'? (No → we need 'does'). Correct form: 'Does she like tea?'

Yes/No Questions

 Yes/No questions start with an auxiliary verb before the subject. In questions the subject is usually after the first verb, and mainly after the first verb

 Examples:

- Do you like coffee?
- Is she studying?
- Did they watch TV?
- Has he finished?
- Will Tom be here tomorrow?
- Have you been working hard?

In present simple questions, we use do/does:

- does he live near here?
- do you live near here?

 In past simple questions, we use did:

- Did you sell your car?
- did he sell his care?

W/H questions

Wh-word + auxiliary + subject + main verb (+ complement)?

Examples:

- Where do you live?
- Why did she leave?

Subject vs. Object Questions

 Subject Question: Who broke the glass? (No auxiliary).

 Object Question: Who did you call? (Needs auxiliary).

who *object*

Emma phoned somebody.
— object —
Who **did** Emma **phone**?

who *subject*

Somebody phoned Emma.
subject —
Who **phoned** Emma?

- Who wants something to eat?
- What happened to you last night?
- How many people came to the party?

Question Tags

A question tag is a short question added at the end of a statement to confirm or check information.

Example: You're coming, aren't you?

Rules & Examples:

Positive → Negative Tag: She is here, isn't she?

Negative → Positive Tag: He isn't ready, is he?

No Auxiliary: You like tea, don't you? She went home, didn't she?

Modal Verbs: You can swim, can't you? He won't come, will he?

We use negative questions especially to show **surprise:**

Didn't you hear the doorbell? I rang it three times.

or when we expect the listener to <u>agree</u> with us:

'Haven't we met before?' 'Yes, I think we have.'

Note the meaning of yes and no in answers to negative questions:

'Don't you want to go?' 'Yes.' (= Yes, I want to go) 〔 'No.' (= No, I don't want to go)

Notes on Auxiliaries and Main Verbs:

If the statement has an auxiliary, use the same in the tag.

If there's only a main verb, use do/does/did depending on tense.

If it uses a modal verb, repeat the modal in the tag.