

# Question tags

1

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* (= mini-questions that we often put on the end of a sentence in spoken English). In question tags, we use an auxiliary verb (**have/was/will** etc.).

We use **do/does/did** for the present and past simple (see also Unit 50):

- 'Karen plays the piano, **doesn't she?**' 'Well, yes, but not very well.'
- 'You didn't lock the door, **did you?**' 'No, I forgot.'

2

Normally we use a *negative* question tag after a *positive* sentence:

<i>positive sentence</i> + <i>negative tag</i>
Mary <b>will</b> be here soon, <b>won't she?</b>
There <b>was</b> a lot of traffic, <b>wasn't there?</b>
Jim <b>should</b> pass the exam, <b>shouldn't he?</b>

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

<i>negative sentence</i> + <i>positive tag</i>
Mary <b>won't</b> be late, <b>will she?</b>
They <b>don't</b> like us, <b>do they?</b>
You <b>haven't</b> got a car, <b>have you?</b>

Notice the meaning of **yes** and **no** in answer to a negative sentence:

- You're **not** going out today, **are you?** { Yes. (= Yes, I am going out)  
No. (= No, I am not going out)

3

Put a question tag on the end of these sentences.

- |    |  |                                     |
|----|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1  | Tom won't be late, ... <b>will he?</b> ... | No, he's never late.                |
| 2  | You're tired, ... <b>aren't you?</b> ...   | 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.                         |
| 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.        |

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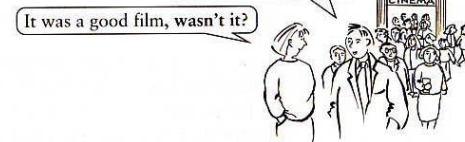
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