

English Grammar: Indirect Questions

Indirect questions are considered more polite than direct questions. They start with a small question (ex. "Can you tell me?" or "Do you know?") and the rest of the phrase must be an affirmation, because a double question is not allowed in English. We use "if" when we ask a "Yes/No" question. Take a look at these examples:

W/H questions	
How are you?	Can you tell me ... how you are?
How is he?	Do you know ... how he is?
When is it?	Do you know ... when it is?
Where is it?	Can you tell me ... where it is?
What is the time?	Can you tell me ... what the time is?
How old are you?	Can you tell me ... how old you are?
What TV shows do you like?	Can you tell me ... what TV shows you like? (<i>aux. verb</i>)
What TV shows does he like?	Do you know ... what TV shows he likes? (<i>aux. verb</i>)
What TV show did you see yesterday?	Can you tell me ... what TV show you saw yesterday? (<i>aux. verb</i>)
What should we do?	Can you tell me ... what we should do?
What is the best restaurant in Curitiba?	Do you know ... what the best restaurant in Curitiba is?
Y/N questions	
Do you like sushi?	Can you tell me ... if you like sushi? (<i>aux. verb</i>)
Does she like sushi?	Can you tell me ... if she likes sushi? (<i>aux. verb</i>)
Are you French?	Can you tell me ... if you are French?
Can he see me?	Do you know ... if he can see me?
Does he like me?	Do you know... if he likes me? (<i>aux. verb</i>)
Did it work?	Do you know ... if it worked? (<i>aux. verb</i>)
Have you decided yet?	Can you tell me ... if you have decided?

Other possible indirect questions:

Could you tell me?
 Can you let me know?
 Do you think?
 Can you explain?
 Could you explain?

Suggested video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TC4M5y07Q68> (11:12-12:36)

Suggested song: J. Lopez - Do you know where you're going to?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BP3B3ovaReg> (3 mins)

Exercise. Convert the following direct questions to indirect questions:

1. Where is the station?

Can you tell me _____ ?

2. Are you coming to the party?

Can you tell me **if** _____ ?

3. How does it work?

Can you explain _____ ?

4. What's the matter?

Can you please tell me _____ ?

5. Where are you from?

Can you let me know _____ ?

6. How long does it take to get there?

Do you know _____ ?

7. Has she made a decision yet?

Do you know **if** _____ yet?

8. What time will you leave tomorrow?

Do you know _____ ?

9. How do we get to the post office from here?

Could you tell us _____ ?

10. What is he doing?

Can you please tell me _____ ?

11. Does Susan like classical music?

Do you know **if** _____ ?

12. Why is Susan studying Japanese?

_____ ?

13. When will your daughter finish university?

_____ ?

14. Does your brother know my sister?

_____ ?

15. Where can I put this trash?

_____ ?

16. Can he play the piano?

_____ ?

17. What's the best shopping mall in Curitiba?

_____ ?