



INDIRECT QUESTION | WHAT IS AN INDIRECT QUESTION?

Study both examples:

Could you tell me what time the shop next door opens?

Do you know if (whether) Mark's coming to the meeting?

Use:

- We use indirect questions when we want to ask a question in a more polite way. We begin with a phrase such as Can / Could you tell me...? Do you know...? Do you think...? Do you remember...? Would you mind telling me...? Do you have any idea...?

- Compare:

What time does the post office open? (direct question) and Could you tell me what time the post office opens? (indirect question)

- In indirect questions, the order is subject + verb.

Can you tell me where it is? NOT Can you tell me where is it?

- We don't use do/did in the second part of the question.

Do you know where he lives? NOT Where does he live?

- You can use if or whether in questions without a question word and after: Can you tell me, Do you know, etc.

- We only use question marks if the introductory phrase itself is a question.

I'd like to know how much it costs. (Not a question)

Do you know how much it costs? (a question)

Some expressions:

Other expressions followed by the word order of indirect questions

The word order of indirect questions is used after:

I wonder..., e.g. I wonder why they didn't come.

I'm not sure..., e.g. I'm not sure what time it starts.

I can't remember..., e.g. I can't remember where I left my phone.

I'd like to know..., e.g. I'd like to know what time you're coming home.