

NEGATIVE QUESTIONS

a.

It is possible to form negative questions with the contraction **n't**. We put **n't** after an auxiliary verb (i.e. *be, have, can*).

Examples:

Aren't you watching videos?

Haven't they finished it yet?

Can't he swim?

It is also possible to form negative questions by putting **n't** after the full verb *be*, and *have in have got*.

Examples:

Aren't you Bob Donley?

Haven't they got any money?

If there are two or more auxiliary verbs, **n't** goes after the first auxiliary.

Example:

Haven't you been listening?

In the simple present and the simple past, there is no auxiliary verb, so we use *do/does* (in the simple present) and *did* (in the simple past) before **n't**.

Examples:

Don't you smoke?

Doesn't she live here anymore?

Didn't they go to the movies?

b.

The word order is different when we use the full form **not** instead of **n't**. Compare:

Are you not watching TV?

Does she not live here anymore?

Aren't you watching TV?

Doesn't she live here anymore?

The forms with **not** are more formal and not so common.

C.

Negative questions are often used to express surprise, disappointment, or annoyance.

Examples:

Don't you smoke? I thought you did.

Hasn't she finished her homework yet? She's been working all morning!

Negative questions are common in exclamations.

Example:

Isn't it an awful day!

We also use negative questions when we think we know something and we are asking for confirmation.

Examples:

Part A: **Aren't** you Bob Donley?

Part B: Yes, I am.

Part A: I thought you were.

d.

Notice the meanings of **yes** and **no** in answers to negative questions.

Example:

“Didn't they see the movie?” – **“Yes.”** (= Yes, they saw the movie.) **“No.”** (= No, they didn't see the movie.)

*Directions: Make negative questions using the **contraction of n't** and the words in parentheses.*

Example: I posted the letter to you over a week ago! Haven't you received (you / have / received it yet?)

1. Why aren't you eating your dinner? (you / do / like it?)

2. Part A: Look! _____ (that / is / your brother over there?)
Part B: Oh yes.
3. Part A: I really must go now.
Part B: But it's only 9:30. (you / can / stay a little longer?)
4. Part A: _____ (she / is / a pretty child!)
Part B: Yes, adorable.
5. _____ (I / have / met you somewhere before?) I'm sure I know your face.
6. Part A: Sally is still in bed.
Part B: _____ (she / is / going to work today?)
7. _____ (you / do / want to come to the concert tonight?) I thought you said you did.