

Information Questions

APSU Writing Center Handout

An **information question** is a question that asks for specific details rather than a simple yes or no.

- **Example:** Where did you go?

They start with a question such as who, what, where, when, and how (and phrases like how often, whose + noun, which + noun).

Structure of an Information Question

Question word + helping verb + subject + main verb?

Helping Verbs

Helping verbs are used with a main verb to show tense, ability, possibility, and necessity in a sentence.

Primary helping verbs function as helping or as main verbs.

- **To be:** am, is, are, was, were, being, been
- **To do:** do, does, did
- **To have:** have, has, had

Modal helping verbs is always used with a main verb.

- can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will would.

In a question, the helping verb comes after the question word and before the subject.

- **Example Statement:** You will order.
- **Example Question:** What will you order?

When There Is No Helping Verb

If the statement doesn't have a helping verb, add a form of do after the question word.

- **Example Statement:** You walked
- **Example Question:** Where did you walk?

How to Fix Common Errors

Check if there is a verb after the question word.

If there is no verb, add one by moving an existing helping verb or adding the correct form of "do".

Incorrect Example: Where we can park?

Correct Example: Where can we park?

Incorrect Example: Where he wants to see?

Correct Example: Where does he want to see?

Question Phrases

Sometimes the question word will be a part of a longer phrase (how much time, who else, and which one).

In these cases, the helping verb or "do" comes after the entire phrase, not immediately after the first word.

- **Example:** How much time do we have?
- **Example:** Who else is going to the event?
- **Example:** Which one are you wearing?

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