

TAG QUESTIONS

I. General rules:

Tag questions are formed using a statement (positive/negative) and a tag.

1. Negative tags:

- Used for positive statements.
- We form using an auxiliary that is in the same tense and for the subject of the statement.
- If there are more than one auxiliary, we use the first one.

They are football players, _____ AREN'T THEY _____?

He went into politics, _____ DIDN'T HE _____?

You would rather eat alone, _____ WOULDN'T YOU _____?

I should have knocked on the door, _____ SHOULDN'T I _____?

2. Positive tags:

- Used for negative statements.
- We form using an auxiliary that is in the same tense and for the subject of the statement.
- If there are more than one auxiliary, we use the first one.

He didn't fail his exam, _____ DID HE _____?

You can't be serious, _____ CAN YOU _____?

They haven't arrived yet, _____ HAVE THEY _____?

He couldn't have done such a thing, _____ COULD THEY _____?

II. Special cases:

1. Someone, no one, anyone, everyone: we use 'they' for the tag

Someone has been here before me, _____ HAVEN'T THEY _____?

Everyone loves the New Year's Eve, _____ DON'T THEY _____?

No one is home, _____ ARE THEY _____?

2. Something, anything, nothing, everything: we use 'it' for the tag

Anything can happen, _____ CAN'T IT _____?

Something has to be done, _____ DOESN'T IT _____?

Nothing has changed since I was here, _____ HAS IT _____?

3. Hardly, barely, scarcely, never,...: we treat it as a negative statement

They hardly ever go out, _____ DO THEY _____?

She never arrives on time, _____ DOES SHE _____?

4. I am: we use 'aren't I' or 'am I not' (old English) for the tag

I'm a good friend, _____ AREN'T I _____?

5. Let's: we use 'shall we' for the tag

Let's go on the dance floor, _____ SHALL WE _____?

6. 'There' as a subject: we use 'there' in the tag

There are 300 students in your school, _____ AREN'T THERE _____?

There is no one in that room, _____ IS THERE _____?

7. This/That as a subject: we use 'it' in the tag

This is your bag, _____ ISN'T IT _____?

That was a compliment, _____ WASN'T IT _____?

8. These/Those as a subject: we use 'they' in the tag

These are the books you gave me, _____ AREN'T THEY _____?

Those were Joseph's friends, _____ WEREN'T THEY _____?

9. I think that/I believe that: we make the tag based on the 'that' clause

I think that the world is getting hotter, _____ ISN'T IT _____?

I believe you haven't given me my money, _____ HAVE YOU _____?

10. Imperatives:

- In most cases, we use 'will you' in the tag. (invitations, demand, reminder). We may sometimes use 'won't you'.

Come to my birthday party, _____ WILL YOU/WON'T YOU _____?

Don't forget to return the books, _____ WILL YOU/WON'T YOU _____?

- We use 'would you' or 'could you please' for polite requests.

Please hold my bag for me, _____ WOULD YOU _____?

Pass me the salt on the table, _____ COULD YOU PLEASE _____?