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Question Tag Rules

Rule – 1

A positive statement is followed by a negative question tag.

Rule – 2

A negative statement is followed by a positive question tag.

Rule – 3

When the verb in the main sentence is in simple present, we form the question tag with do/does.

Rule – 4

If the verb is in the simple past, we use 'did'.

Rule – 5

When the statement contains a word with a negative meaning, the question tag needs to be positive.

Rule – 6

If the statement has a modal, It is repeated in the tag.

Rule – 7

With the Simple Present tense, we use 'do', 'does', 'don't', 'doesn't', while with the simple past tense, we use 'did', 'didn't'. With the present perfect we use, 'have', 'haven't'.

Rule – 8

Question tags with 'have' and 'do' are often possible after the auxiliary 'have' or 'has'.

Rule – 9

If the statement contains words, such as no, no one, nothing, nobody, scarcely, hardly, hardly ever, never, neither, seldom, under no circumstances, etc, it is considered a negative statement and followed by an affirmative tag.

Rule – 10

If the subject of the statement is somebody, anybody, nobody, everybody, no one and neither – you use the pronoun ‘they’ in question tag.

Rule – 11

When the subject of the statement is ‘that’ or ‘this’ the pronoun in the tag is ‘it’. the pronoun ‘they’ is for their plural forms – these and those.

Rule – 12

When we use a ‘there + be’ combination in a sentence, the pronoun in the tag is ‘there’.

Rule – 13

When ‘let’s’ is used in a sentence, the question tag used is ‘shall we?’

Rule – 14

‘Have to’ is considered Simple Present and ‘had to’ is considered Simple past.

Rule – 15

Some introductory phrases such as ‘I am afraid’, ‘I think’, ‘I believe’, ‘I am sure’, ‘I suspect’, ‘I suppose’, ‘It appears that’, ‘It seems that’, ‘It looks if, ‘as far as I remember’, ‘as far as I can see’, etc. don’t affect question, except for the transfer of negation.

Rule – 16

If the subject of the sentence is everything, nothing, something, anything the pronoun in the tag is ‘it’.

Rule – 17

After positive imperatives, we use ‘will you’, ‘won’t you’, ‘can you’, ‘can’t you’, ‘could you’, etc. Yet for the negative imperatives we only use ‘will you?’

Rule – 18

After ‘I am’, the tag used is ‘aren’t’.

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