

Question Words

Question words help us to communicate what we need and ask for specific information. With practice, question words are quite easy to use and remember.

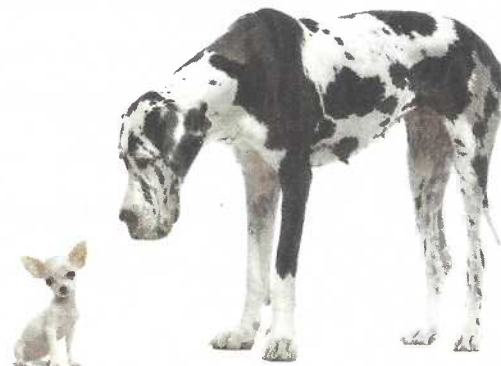
QUESTION WORD	INFORMATION ASKED	EXAMPLE
Who	person/people	Q: Who is that laughing? A: It's my sister .
What	thing/event	Q: What do you consider funny? A: I consider That '70s Show funny.
Where	place	Q: Where did he learn all his jokes? A: He learned them at school .
When	moment in time	Q: When is the show? A: It's next Saturday .
Why	reason	Q: Why do we laugh? A: It makes us feel good .
Whose	possession	Q: Whose joke is funny? A: Kelly's joke is funny.
Which	choice	Q: Which comedy do you prefer? A: I prefer the first one .
How*	manner	Q: How did they say the joke? A: They said it casually .
	degree	Q: How do you like his humour? A: I really don't like it.

* Some other common adverbs and adjectives that follow *how* are *fast, slow, old, young, tall, soft, hard, hot, cold, good, bad, tall, short, big, small* and *frequently*.

For more about forming information questions, see page 189 and the interrogative forms of the past, present and future in Grammar Points 1, 2 and 3.

1 ★ Match the question words on the left with an appropriate answer.

- | | | |
|-----------|-------|-------------------------|
| 1. Who? | _____ | a) on Sunday |
| 2. Where? | _____ | b) by laughing out loud |
| 3. Why? | _____ | c) the pink one |
| 4. What? | _____ | d) it makes him happy |
| 5. Which? | _____ | e) laughter |
| 6. When? | _____ | f) Dr. Prince |
| 7. How? | _____ | g) in India |
| 8. Whose? | _____ | h) her teacher's |



- 2** ★ Read the answer to each question below. Decide which question word best completes the question and write it in the space provided.

Question	Answer
1. _____ are you laughing so much?	I saw the funniest commercial on television.
2. _____ is a gelotologist?	It's someone who specializes in the study of humour.
3. _____ was unexpected about his joke?	I didn't expect the punchline.
4. _____ do you think people laugh during a tense moment?	They laugh to relieve tension and stress.
5. _____ is the best time to tell my joke?	It's better to wait until class is over.
6. _____ is that comedian performing at the festival?	His name is Chris Mars and he's hilarious.
7. _____ did you know Frank was in the next room?	I recognized his laugh.
8. _____ are you ticklish?	My knees and feet are ticklish.
9. _____ sense of humour do you appreciate the most?	I appreciate my mom's humour more than my dad's.
10. _____ comedian do you think is the funniest?	I like the one with the accent.



- 3** ★ Write a question that goes with each answer. There may be more than one possibility.

Example: It was so funny I was rolling on the floor.

Question: What were you doing? / Why were you rolling on the floor?

- Teenagers don't meet the legal age required to perform in a comedy club.

- Stand-up comedy is when a comedian performs in front of a live audience.

- Most people prefer stand-up comedy to improvisational comedy.

- Sandra and Joseph are the class clowns.

How + adjective/adverb

When we combine **how** and an adjective or adverb, we can ask questions about age, distance, speed, cost, quantity and so on. The information we are looking for is placed before the verb.

QUESTION WORD	INFORMATION ASKED	EXAMPLE
How many	number (count)*	Q: How many jokes does Sam know? A: Sam knows dozens of jokes.
How much	amount (non-count)*	Q: How much pressure can she handle? A: She can handle a lot .
How often	frequency	Q: How often do you laugh? A: I laugh every day .
How long	duration	Q: How long did it take before you became famous? A: It took six months .
	length	Q: How long is the joke book? A: It's about 200 pages .
How far	distance	Q: How far is the gag shop from here? A: It's around the block .

* See the chart below for more about count and non-count nouns.

To help you understand when to use **how many** and **how much** correctly, you need to know the difference between **count** and **non-count nouns**.

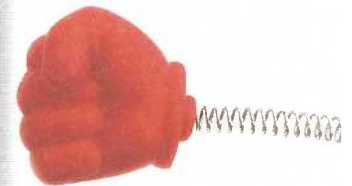
COUNT AND NON-COUNT NOUNS

The question how many? is used with count nouns	The question how much? is used with non-count nouns
Count nouns can be counted. They have singular and plural forms. one joke two jokes one comedian two comedians	Non-count nouns cannot be counted. Normally, they do not have a plural form. rain / rains food / foøds knowledge / knowledges ketchup / ketchups
Some plurals are irregular and do not add -s. They are still considered count nouns. one woman two women one foot two feet	Non-count nouns are singular. Use the singular form of the verb with them. That information is missing. The food is finished.
For more on irregular plurals see page 247.	Never use an indefinite article (a or an) or a number before non-count nouns. a-water an-information six-mails

Note: Sometimes a non-count noun indicates a group of items. The items within the group are countable nouns only.

Non-count: Money
Time

Count: (dollars, bills, coins, cents)
(years, months, days)



- 4 ★ Read the following announcement and write questions using **how much** and **how many**. Indicate whether the subject of the sentence is a count or non-count noun.

JOIN THE LAUGH-THERAPY CLUB

**Do You Want to Feel Less Stressed
And Have More Fun?**

Join the Laugh-Therapy Club!

Jeffrey Sauv  and Mimi Razor, two students from Terry Fox High School, announce the launch of a new club called **Live to Laugh**. Come and find out how to add humour to your life without even telling a joke. Laughter will help you relax at school, improve your concentration and get better grades. Discover the benefits of laugh therapy and its effects on you and the people around you. Along with 15 other students, you will learn laughing techniques and participate in an intensive laughter session. In addition to having fun, the Laugh-Therapy Club has a goal to raise money for the benefit of St. Mary's Hospital for Sick Children. Bring a friend and join others for a session of laugh therapy next Friday, in room 105B.

Example: the number of students in the laugh-therapy club
How many students are in the laugh-therapy club? (students = count noun)

1. the cost of one session

2. the amount of money the club wants to raise

3. the number of days the laugh-therapy club will meet

4. the number of friends to bring with you

5. the length (in hours) the session will last

6. the amount of information you will learn
