

## Three Ways to Ask a Question

Bonjour!

What's your name? How are you? What's the weather like today?

A big part of human social interaction is asking and answering questions. Do you know how to ask a question in French? Keep watching to learn how!

In French, there are three ways to ask a question: intonation, *est-ce que*, and inversion. Let's briefly talk about each one.

Intonation is when you change a statement to a question by raising the pitch of your voice at the end. Repeat this statement after me:

*Vous parlez français.*

*Très bien.* Now, let's make that a question:

*Vous parlez français?*

Do you hear the difference?

Another way of asking a question in French is by using *est-ce que*. Like the upside down question mark at the beginning of a question in Spanish, *est-ce que* tells you that a question is coming. Let's look at this statement again:

*Vous parlez français.*

To turn it into a question, you can put *est-ce que* at the beginning and add a question mark at the end.

*Est-ce que vous parlez français ?*

The third way of asking a question in French is the most formal. It's called inversion. With inversion, you switch the places of the subject and the verb and put a hyphen between them. Look at our example statement:

*Vous parlez français.*

With inversion, this becomes:

*Parlez-vous français?*

Let's look at another example:

*Il aime voyager.* He likes to travel

With inversion it becomes:

*Aime-t-il voyager?*

What is different about this question? When the verb ends with a vowel (*aime*) and the subject begins with one (*il*), you need to put a 't' between them. Notice that a hyphen goes on either

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side of the 't.'

Interrogative expressions are words and phrases used to ask questions. These expressions help you ask more complex questions. Repeat after me.

*Que* [add brief pause after each word for student to repeat]

*Qui*

*Quand*

*Où*

*Pourquoi*

*Comment*

*Combien de*

With interrogative expressions, you can ask questions like:

*Pourquoi parlez-vous français?* Why do you speak French?

*Qui parle français?*

Who speaks French?

*Où parlez-vous français?*

Where do you speak French ?

And many more!

Whew! That's a lot. Let's review, okay?

There are three ways to ask a question: intonation, *est-ce que*, and inversion. The statement 'Vous parlez français' can become

Vous parlez français ? (intonation)

Est-ce que vous parlez français ? (*est-ce que*)

Or

Parlez-vous français ?(inversion)

Question words help you to ask more complex questions. In English, these words are who, what, when, where, why, how, and how many. Examples are:

*Comment étudiez-vous français?* How do you study French?

*Qu'est-ce que vous étudiez?*

What do you study?

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Repeat each question after me:

Comment étudiez-vous français?

Qu'est-ce que vous étudiez?

Très bien!

In this video, we've briefly talked about how to ask a question using intonation, *est-ce que*, and inversion. Keep following along with this lesson to learn more about asking and answering questions!

Bon travail!

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