

Lesson Plan: Indirect questions

Level	Intermediate (B1–B2)
Time	60–75 minutes
Skills	Grammar, speaking, writing
Focus	Could you tell me...? / Do you know...? / I was wondering... — word order in indirect questions

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Form indirect questions correctly using statement word order
- Use a range of indirect question phrases for politeness
- Understand the difference between direct and indirect questions in register
- Use indirect questions appropriately in formal and professional contexts

TARGET LANGUAGE (EXAMPLES)

Indirect question phrases

- Could you tell me...?
- Do you know...?
- I was wondering if / whether...
- Would you mind telling me...?
- I'd like to know...

Word order

- Direct: Where is the station?
- Indirect: Could you tell me where the station is?
- Direct: What time does the film start?
- Indirect: Do you know what time the film starts?

Yes/no questions → if/whether

- Direct: Is the manager available?
- Indirect: I was wondering if the manager is available.
- Do you know whether the report has been submitted?

Common errors

- Could you tell me where is the station? (WRONG — don't invert)
- Do you know what time does it start? (WRONG)

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. Warm-up (10 min)

Task: Politeness check: which sounds more professional?

- 'Where's the bathroom?' vs. 'Could you tell me where the bathroom is?'

- Discuss contexts where indirect questions are more appropriate.

2. Presentation (15 min)

Task: Direct → indirect transformation with colour-coded word order.

- Key rule: after an indirect opener, use statement word order (no inversion, no auxiliary).
- Yes/no questions need if/whether after the opener.

3. Guided practice (10 min)

Task: Rewrite direct questions as indirect.

- 'How long does the journey take?' → 'Do you know how long the journey takes?'
- 'Is there a vegetarian option?' → 'I was wondering if there is a vegetarian option.'

4. Role play (20 min)

Task: Professional situations: job interview, hotel reception, customer service.

- Students must use indirect questions only in the formal role.
- Evaluate: was the word order correct? Did it sound natural?

5. Error correction (5 min)

Task: Identify and fix 5 indirect question errors.

EXTENSION / HOMEWORK

Choose one:

1. Write an email requesting information using at least 5 indirect questions.
2. Rewrite a series of direct questions as indirect for a formal context.
3. Write a dialogue at an information desk using only indirect questions.