

## Indirect Questions

### Exercise 1

First, let's remind ourselves of the basic grammar of direct questions. Answers below.

Make corrections for the following questions:

1. What the name is of your cat?
2. Is you a teacher?
3. Did you had to work at weekends in your old job?
4. You like chocolate?
5. How old your daughter is?
6. Where the park is from here?
7. How long does the bridge?
8. What your father does for a job?
9. Your apartment is which one?
10. What arrives time does your brother?

We often use indirect questions when we want permission to:

- **To avoid being rude:** someone is foreign, age, pregnancy, marital status, children
- **To ask permission to talk about private/personal/sensitive information:**
  - diet
  - sexual history
  - lifestyle
  - relationships
  - parenting style
  - weight
  - mental state
  - emotions
- **Signpost changes of topic in a conversation**

The way we will explore the questions and language in this class is by understanding the correct structure of question grammar.

We'll use this colour code:

<b>Auxiliary Verb</b>	<b>Subject</b>
<b>Verb</b>	<b>Question Word</b>

We are studying today to avoid making this error:

Could you tell me how are you feeling?

If we do this, then we are actually adding a question two questions together!

When we use the indirect question starters **we have to convert the direct question in the second half into a statement**, by changing the grammar.

Could you tell me how are you feeling?

**Change the second half from a question to a statement:**

Could you tell me how you are feeling?

Would you mind telling me how many times did you vomit yesterday?

**Change the second half from a question to a statement:**

Would you mind telling me how many times you vomited yesterday?

Useful language for indirect questions and statements:

Indirect Questions		
Indirect starter	middle section	question
Would you mind telling me	(a little bit) about	<b>no auxiliary verb necessary for the question structure:</b> how you broke your arm? what things trigger your migraines? how long you have been feeling like this? how many times you vomited yesterday?
Could you tell me	some details about	
Could you give me	some details about	
Would it be ok if	we discussed	
Would you mind if	we had a chat about	
	I asked you a few questions about	

Indirect Statements		
Indirect starter	Question	Question tag
I would like to discuss	how you broke your arm.	Is that ok?
I would like to have a chat about	what things trigger your migraines.	Ok?
Why don't we move on to	how long you have been feeling like this. wrist/painful?	Is that ok with you?

**\* This is really good for signposting a change, which is part of Providing Structure in OET Speaking.**

## Exercise 2

Let's make indirect questions and statements:

1. **Current medication?**
2. **Dialysis - explain**
3. **Diet?**
4. **Medication compliance issues - discuss**
5. **Father's health - discuss?**
6. **Hurt/wrist?**

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## Answers

### Exercise

#### Exercise 1

1. What is the name of your cat?
2. Are you a teacher?
3. Did you have to work at weekends in your old job?
4. Do you like chocolate?
5. How old is your daughter?
6. Where is the park from here?
7. How long is the bridge?
8. What does your father do for a job?
9. Which one is your apartment?
10. What time does your brother arrive?

#### Exercise 2

Let's make indirect questions and statements:

##### 1. Medication?

- Would you mind telling me what your current medication is?
- Would it be ok to discuss what your current medication is?
- Could we have a chat about which medication you are currently taking?

##### 2. Dialysis - explain

- Is it ok if I explain what dialysis is?
- Let's talk about what dialysis is.
- I would like to move on and discuss what dialysis is. How does that sound? / Is that ok?

##### 3. Diet?

- Could you tell me about your diet?
- Would it be ok if we discussed your diet? permission
- Would you mind if I asked some questions about your diet?
- Would you mind me telling me about your diet?

##### 4. Medication compliance issues - discuss

- Next, I would like to discuss your medication compliance issues, if that's ok?
- Do you mind if I ask some questions about your medication compliance issues?

**5. Father's health - discuss?**

- Would you mind telling me about your father's health?
- Would you mind if we discussed your father's health?

**6. Hurt/wrist?**

- Would it be ok if we discussed how you hurt your wrist?
- Would you mind telling me how you hurt your wrist?
- Could you tell me a little more about how you hurt your wrist?
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