

Pronunciation

Intonation in question tags

4.6 In question tags, the intonation either falls ↘ or rises ↗.

Falling intonation means that the sentence is more like a statement = I'm sure I'm right. *Can you just confirm that for me?*

Rising intonation means that the sentence is more like a real question = I'm not sure if I'm right about this. *Correct me if I'm wrong.*



Both patterns are very common in spoken English because they invite other people to join in the conversation.

1 4.7 Write the question tags for the statements. Listen and check.

- 1 It's really warm again today, isn't it?
- 2 You're angry with me, _____?
- 3 Last night was such a hot night, _____?
- 4 You couldn't help me carry this bag, _____?
- 5 Antonio's late again, _____?
- 6 It's cold for this time of year, _____?
- 7 John didn't fail his driving test again, _____?
- 8 You haven't seen my pen anywhere, _____?
- 9 By the end of the film we were all in tears, _____?
- 10 You wouldn't have change for a £10 note, _____?

2 4.7 Listen again to 1 and mark whether the tag falls (↘) or rises (↗).

3 Write a sentence and question tag for these situations.

- 1 You ask Tom if he could help you with your homework.
Tom, you couldn't help me with my homework, could you?
- 2 You're coming out of a restaurant where you have just had a really awful meal with a friend.
That _____?
- 3 You can't believe that your sister has borrowed your new coat again.
You _____?
- 4 You need a neighbour to water your plants while you're away.
You _____?
- 5 You think that Vanessa's plane leaves at 11 o'clock.
Vanessa, your _____?

4 4.8 Now listen to the sentences and mark the intonation pattern.