Direct and Indirect Questions with Examples

Today we are going to look at two ways of asking questions, direct and indirect and see when to use them. Then we will differentiate them with the help of examples.

Do you know that there is an important branch in English grammar which deals with “questions”. Consider –

* Where is the guitar?
* Could you tell me where the guitar is?

So what’s the difference that you could find between the above mentioned examples? The former one is called as the ***direct question*** and the latter one is an ***indirect question.***Both of them convey the same meaning, so what’s the difference between?

Examples of Direct Questions

These are general or normal questions that can be used to ask our family, friends or a close circle.

Following are some examples of direct questions:

* Why did you come?
* When will you start the show?
* Where is the supermarket?
* Who is that person?
* Where are you going?
* Where is she?

Examples of Indirect Questions

indirect questions are a way to ask in a more polite and obedient way. These are generally used to ask strangers, officials etc.

Following are some examples of indirect questions :

* Do you know why did he come?
* Can you tell me where the supermarket is?
* Do you know who that person is?

Now as you’ve got to know about what are direct and indirect questions, remember that

‘said to’ of direct speech changes to ‘asked’, ‘questioned’,  or ‘inquired’ in Indirect speech.

Difference Between Direct and Indirect Questions

**Example 1:**

DIRECT – What day does the school reopen?

INDIRECT – Do you know what day the school reopens?

Note that the verb in indirect speech changes to plural in this type of questions.

**Example 2:**

DIRECT –  Why did you play the guitar?

INDIRECT –  I was thinking why you played the guitar?

In this type, the word ‘do’ or other doesn’t appear in indirect form, as it more about being a statement providing information rather than asking a question.

**Example 3:**

DIRECT – How has bob tricked the magician at the show?

INDIRECT – Do you have any idea how Bob tricked the magician at the show?

In these cases, when the helping verbs like “has” or “have” occur, then their respective forms would be changed accordingly.

**Example 4:**

DIRECT –  Can we postpone the exam to Monday?

INDIRECT –  Is there any chance we could postpone the exam to Monday?

**Example 5:**

DIRECT – He said, “Can you walk?”

INDIRECT – He said if I could walk

**Example 6:**

DIRECT – Are you joining the club?

INDIRECT – Could you tell me if you’re joining the club?

This is the form in which there’s a probability of a YES or a NO. So in these cases, **if** can be used in indirect forms.

I hope these examples are good enough to give you a clear difference between the two types.

Keep exploring EnglishBix for more resources to learn how to properly ask questions in English.