

Wh-Questions Intonation

Let's Learn!

Listen to the question 'Where are you going?' in these conversations:

1. A: I'm going on holiday.

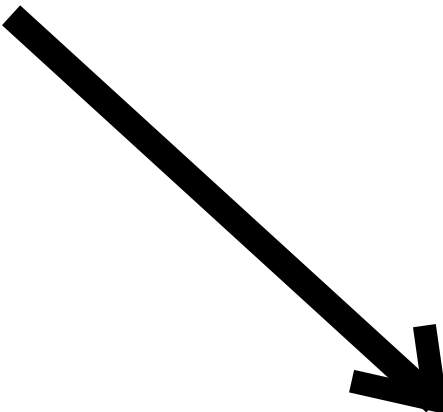
B: **Where are you** ↘ going?

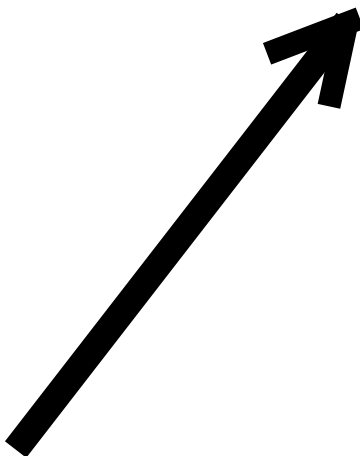
2. A: I'm going to India.

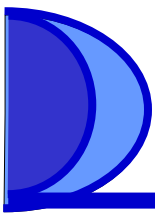
B: ↗ **Where** are you going?

How is the intonation different? Why?

- When we ask for **new information**, we normally use falling ↘ intonation.
- When we **already know the answer** to a question, we use rising ↗ intonation.
- In new information questions, we normally **stress the last content word**.
- In repeated questions, we normally **stress the questions word**.

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1. ↘ Who?
 2. ↘ Where?
 3. ↘ Why?
 4. When will you get ↘ back?
 5. Why can't you ↘ come?
 6. Which one is ↘ yours?
 7. Where are you ↘ going?
 8. What are you ↘ doing?
 9. How ↘ much?

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1. ↗ Who?
 2. ↗ Where?
 3. ↗ Why?
 4. ↗ When will you get back?
 5. ↗ Why can't you come?
 6. ↗ Which one is yours?
 7. ↗ Where are you going?
 8. ↗ What are you doing?
 9. ↗ How much?



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Let's Try!

Directions: Study the conversations and decide from the context if the intonation in the question is falling or rising. Write an ↗ arrow up if the intonation rises and an ↘ arrow down if it falls beside each question.

1. a) I think I'll have to miss tomorrow's meeting.

Why can't you come?

b) I can't come out tonight, my hair is too wet. I had to wash it 3 or 4 times.

Why can't you come?

2. a) I'm at my sister's house.

What are you doing?

b) I'm having dinner with Queen Elizabeth.

What are you doing?

3. a) I'm meeting Zainab later.

Who?

b) I'm meeting someone later.

Who?

4. a) Can you pass me my coat?

Which one is yours?

b) My car's over there, look, it's the blue Rolls Royce!

Which one is yours?

5. a) I should be back next year, it depends how my job goes.

When will you get back?

b) I'm having a great time here, but I'm missing home.

When will you get back?