

# INTONATION of QUESTIONS

# Main types of questions:

- General
- Special
- Alternative
- Disjunctive

# Intonation of general questions

General questions are pronounced:

- M-H Rising nuclear tone
- H-N Rising nuclear tone
- Low Rising nuclear tone
- Falling-Rising nuclear tone
  - Falling nuclear tone

Neutral general questions are pronounced with a Mid or M-H Rise preceded by a high level or stepping head and normal or high prehead.

According to the communicative meaning neutral general questions ask for information only, don't convey any additional connotations (the speaker's personal interest, surprise, scepticism)

Neutral general questions sound light, airy, formal or businesslike:

-I 'saw a `film last ,night.

- Did you ´like it?

Echo questions or Interrogative  
Repetitions are pronounced with a  
High Narrow Rise.



Echo questions or Interrogative Repetitions are used by the listener because he hasn't heard the speaker's words clearly or he is surprised at what he has heard, or in order to gain time before answering:

- 'Do you 'know his 'name?

- 'Do I 'know his 'name?

Friendly General Questions are pronounced with a L-R Nuclear Tone or F-R Tone preceded by a high-pitched prenuclear part.

Friendly General Questions taking this pattern show the speaker's interest in the listener himself and in receiving information.

FGQ are frequent when talking to  
children:

I don't want to draw any more.

'Are you ,tired?

GQ-s pronounced with FNT (high) combined with a high or stepping head gives the question a note of suggestion, offer, invitation:

-We are 'going ' out to 'see a  
`picture. 'Would you 'like to `join  
us?

GQ-s pronounced with FNT (Low) combined with a high prenuclear pitch gives an insistent or a sceptical note to the questions.

GQ-s are used when the speaker is not satisfied with the listener's answer and has to repeat his original question:  
He's 'promised to 'stop ,smoking. - 'Does he 'really ,mean what he ,says?

# Complex General Questions

Complex GQ are pronounced as a simple tune or a combined tune.



Simple tune – CGQ-s take the same nuclear tones as simple general questions: 'Do you 'know where Mrs. 'Green 'works?

Combined tune – CGQ-s take a  
Rising nuclear tone in each of the  
intonation group:

Do you 'think it's 'too ,damp to 'sit  
on the ,grass?

# Intonation of Special Questions

The common intonation patterns:

- FNT (High, Mid, Low) with a normal or high prehead and a high or stepping head (Normal, or neutral Special questions, Specifying or Insistent Special questions);
- RNT (Low) with a high-pitched prenuclear part (Friendly Special questions).

Normal, or neutral Special  
questions:

- I'm afraid I'm seriously ill. –
- 'What has been `troubling you?

Specifying or Insistent Special  
questions:

There's 'somebody's `bag in the  
,car. – `Whose bag?

Friendly Special questions:

- 'What's your ,name, little 'boy?

- `Bobby.

- - And your ,mother's 'name?

- `Jane.