

37 Short answers

1 Look at this example:



QUESTION	+ SHORT ANSWER
Is he at work?	~ Yes, he is.
Can I come?	~ No, you can't.
Do you like it?	~ Yes, I do.
Does she live here?	~ No, she doesn't.

We call these 'short answers' because they are not 'full' answers:

Is she sick? { Yes, she is sick. (full answer)
Yes, she is. (short answer)

We use short answers to reply to 'yes/no' questions (see Unit 29):

Are you coming? { Yes, I am.
No, I'm not.

2 We form short answers by not using the main verb from the question:

Have they gone? ~ Yes, they have gone.
Did he go to Paris? ~ Yes, he did go.
Is she waiting? ~ Yes, she is waiting.

When the main verb is be, we use be:

Are you tired? ~ Yes, I am.

When we answer No, we use a negative verb:

Will they win? ~ No, they won't.
Did Paul come? ~ No, he didn't.
Are you cold? ~ No, I'm not.

We never use positive short forms in short answers:

Are you tired? ~ Yes, I am. (NOT Yes, I'm.)
Is he happy? ~ Yes, he is. (NOT Yes, he's.)

3 We can also use short answers to reply 'yes' or 'no' to statements:

STATEMENT	+ REPLY
He's working hard.	~ Yes, he is.
She's at work.	~ No, she isn't.
She loves films.	~ Yes, she does.

Note that with Present Simple or Past Simple verbs, we use do, does or did in the reply:

She loves films. ~ Yes, she does.
He liked the book. ~ Yes, he did.

4 When we write, we normally put a 'comma' (,) after Yes or No in short answers:

He lives in London. ~ No, he doesn't.

B Write the correct answers to the questions. Use the phrases in the box.

Yes, she did.	No, he doesn't.	No, she wasn't.	Yes, he has.	No, I can't.
Yes, I will.	Yes, they have.	Yes, I do.	No, they aren't.	

- ▶ Have they all left? ~ Yes, they have.
- Does Steve work hard? ~
 - Do you like this music? ~
 - Are they listening? ~
 - Did she enjoy her holiday? ~
 - Was Mary at the concert? ~
 - Will you phone this weekend? ~
 - Can you play the guitar? ~
 - Has he gone to bed? ~

C Write positive short answers and then negative short answers for the questions.

- ▶ Was the film good? { ~ Yes, it was.
~ No, it wasn't.
- Does he enjoy French food? { ~ Yes,
~ No,
 - Can he swim? { ~ Yes,
~ No,
 - Will they return tonight? { ~ Yes,
~ No,
 - Do you want to buy that shirt? { ~ Yes,
~ No,
 - Are they coming in Mike's car? { ~ Yes,
~ No,
 - Did you ask Sally to come? { ~ Yes,
~ No,
 - Is your headache better? { ~ Yes,
~ No,
 - Were the exams difficult? { ~ Yes,
~ No,

D Bill always says Yes. Tom always says No. Write their answers.

- | | Bill: | Tom: |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| ▶ Japanese people eat a lot of fish. | ~ Yes, they do. | ~ No, they don't. |
| 1 The sun always shines in England. | ~ | ~ |
| 2 New York is the capital of America. | ~ | ~ |
| 3 Italy will win the next World Cup. | ~ | ~ |
| 4 Bananas are delicious. | ~ | ~ |
| 5 Cats can sing beautifully. | ~ | ~ |
| 6 The English speak very slowly. | ~ | ~ |

Practice

A Make short answers by putting in a 'full stop' (.) and a line (—).

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
▶ Can you come tonight?	~ Yes, I can. come tonight.
1 Will you see Ted tomorrow?	~ Yes, I will see Ted tomorrow.
2 Have you finished your breakfast?	~ No, I haven't finished my breakfast.
3 Do you drive to work?	~ Yes, I do drive to work.
4 Did she come yesterday?	~ No, she didn't come yesterday.
5 Were you tired after the game?	~ Yes, I was tired after the game.
6 Can she sing well?	~ No, she can't sing well.
7 Did Tom have a holiday?	~ Yes, he did have a holiday.
8 Is she studying French?	~ Yes, she is studying French.
9 Do you play golf?	~ No, I don't play golf.
10 Did you buy a new table?	~ Yes, I did buy a new table.
11 Are you thirsty?	~ No, I'm not thirsty.
12 Has Jane been to Mexico before?	~ Yes, she has been there before.