Forming questions

—Et pourquoi ce ne serait pas pour vous, d’abord?

- Rising intonation is the simplest way to ask a yes/no question. Just say the same words as when making a statement and raise your pitch at the end.

Tu connais mon ami Pascal?
Do you know my friend Pascal?

- You can also ask a question by placing est-ce que before the subject. If the latter begins with a vowel sound, est-ce que becomes est-ce qu’.

Est-ce que vous prenez des risques?
Do you take risks?

Est-ce qu’il a cinq ans?
Is he five years old?

- You can place a tag question at the end of a statement.

Tu es canadien, n’est-ce pas?
You are Canadian, right?

On va partir à 8h00, d’accord?
We’re going to leave at 8 o’clock, OK?

- You can invert the order of the subject pronoun and the verb. Remember to add a hyphen whenever you use inversion. If the verb ends in a vowel and the subject is il, elle, or on, add -t- between the verb and the pronoun.

Aimes-tu les maths?
Do you like math?

Préfère-t-il le bleu ou le vert?
Does he prefer blue or green?

- To ask for specific types of information, use the appropriate interrogative words and falling intonation.

Interrogative words

combien (de)? how much/many?
comment? how?
où? where?
pourquoi? why?
quand? when?
que/quoi? what?
(à/avec/pour) qui? (to/with/for) who(m)?
(avec/de) quoi? (with/about) what?

Où est-ce qu’on peut faire du vélo?
Where can we go cycling?
You can use various methods of question formation with interrogative words.

Quand est-ce qu’ils mangent?  
When are they eating?

Combien d’étudiants y a-t-il?  
How many students are there?

The interrogative adjective quel means which or what. Like other adjectives, it agrees in gender and number with the noun it modifies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The interrogative adjective quel</th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>quel</td>
<td>quel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>quel(le)</td>
<td>quel(le)</td>
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</tbody>
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—Je suis à l’hôtel.  
—Carole aime cette chanson.

—Quel hôtel?  
—Quelle chanson?

Quel(le)s can be used with a noun or with a form of the verb être.

Quelle est ton adresse?  
What is your address?

Quelles sont tes fleurs préférées?

What are your favorite flowers?

To avoid repetition, use the interrogative pronoun lequel. Like quel, it agrees in number and gender with the noun it modifies. Since it is a pronoun, the noun is not stated.

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<tr>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>lequel</td>
<td>lesquel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>laquelle</td>
<td>lesquelles</td>
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—Je vais prendre cette jupe.  
—Laure adore ces bonbons.

—I’m going to take this skirt.  
—Laure loves these candies.

—Laquelle?

—Lesquelles?

—Which one?

—Which ones?

Lequel and its forms can be used with the prepositions à and de. When this occurs, the usual contractions with à and de are made. In the singular, contractions are made only with the masculine forms.

à + lequel = auquel  
but à + laquelle = à laquelle

dé + lequel = duquel  
but de + laquelle = de laquelle

—Mon frère a peur du chien.  
—Nous allons au cinéma.  
—Je vais à l’université.

—Duquel est-ce qu’il a peur?  
—Auquel allez-vous?  
—À laquelle vas-tu?

In the plural, contractions are made with both the masculine and feminine forms: auxquels, auxquelles; desquels, desquelles.

—Le prof parle aux étudiantes.

—Il a besoin de livres.

—Auxquelles est-ce qu’il parle?  
—Desquels a-t-il besoin?