



Ask Questions in Portuguese

Portuguese Lesson

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Video transcript

Hey there and welcome to Ablas! In this video, we're going to learn how to ask questions in European Portuguese. Be sure to download the PDF of today's lesson from the link in the description!

Yes/no questions

So let's start off simple with some yes or no questions.

To ask a yes or no question, you can simply add a question mark to the end of the sentence. For example: *És português?* Without the question mark, this would mean "you are Portuguese." But with the question mark in place, we're asking the question, "are you Portuguese?"

We can emphasise the fact that we're asking a question like this: *És português, não és?* "You're Portuguese, aren't you?"

If you're answering one of these questions, you could reply with a simple yes or no... *sim, não...* but this can sound a bit short. Instead, we can repeat the verb in the sentence.

- *És português? Sim, estou.* — This is like saying "Yes, I am."
- *Gostas de chocolate? Não gosto.* — "Do you like chocolate? No, I don't."

Open-ended questions

Now let's take things one step further and see if we can ask some open-ended questions.

- We can use *que* to ask the question "what". *O que estás a fazer?* "What are you doing?" We usually add the definite article *O* at the start of the question, but not when *que* is followed by a noun. *Que dia é hoje?* "What day is it today?" And lastly, we add an accent on *que* when it's at the end of a sentence. *O quê?*
- We use *qual* to ask the question "which". *Qual é que preferes?* "Which one do you prefer?" Notice that we can optionally add *é que* to the question; it's very common, but doesn't add any extra meaning. And if we're referring to multiple things, we can say: *Quais preferes?* "Which ones do you prefer?"

- The next question is "when". Quando vens? "When are you coming?"
- And here's how we say "who". Quem és? "Who are you?"
- We can use quanto to ask how much something is. Quanto custa? "How much does it cost?" When we use quanto with a noun, it has to agree with the gender and plurality. Let's say someone asks you how many apples you want. Because maçã is feminine in Portuguese and we're referring to multiple apples, we say: Quantas maçãs quer?
- If we wanted to ask how to do something, we say: Como fazes isso? But we can also use quão if we're asking to what degree something is. Quão difícil é? "How difficult is it?"
- To ask why, we can say porque. Porque não gostas? "Why don't you like it?" However, when we use it on its own, we need to add another accent. Porquê?
- And the last question word we'll cover today is "where". Onde estás? "Where are you?" If we're asking a question about going somewhere, for example, "where are you going to", we can say: Aonde vais?

Conversation

Let's put what we've learned into practice with an example conversation.

	English	Portuguese
	Miguel, Sofia and Inês are in a café planning their summer holiday.	O Miguel, a Sofia e a Inês estão num café a planear as férias de verão.
Miguel:	So, where are we going this year?	Então, onde é que vamos este ano?
Sofia:	I don't know. What do you prefer? Beach or mountains?	Não sei. O que é que preferem? Praia ou montanha?

	English	Portuguese
Inês:	I prefer the beach! But when can we go? I have work until the fifteenth.	Eu prefiro praia! Mas quando é que podemos ir? Tenho trabalho até dia quinze.
Miguel:	Who's going to drive? I don't have a licence.	Quem é que vai conduzir? Eu não tenho carta.
Sofia:	I can drive. How many days do we have available?	Eu posso conduzir. Quantos dias é que temos disponíveis?
Inês:	It depends. Why? Are you thinking of something specific?	Depende. Porquê? Estás a pensar em algo específico?
Sofia:	Yes, there's a place in the Algarve that's fantastic. What's your budget?	Sim, há um sítio no Algarve que é fantástico. Qual é o vosso orçamento?
Miguel:	How much does it cost per night?	Quanto é que custa por noite?
Sofia:	Around sixty euros per person. How does that sound to you?	À volta de sessenta euros por pessoa. Como é que vos parece?
Inês:	Sounds good to me! How many people are going in total?	Parece-me bem! Quantas pessoas é que vão no total?
Sofia:	Just us three, right? Or shall we invite someone else?	Só nós três, certo? Ou vamos convidar mais alguém?
Miguel:	For me, just us three is perfect. When do we book?	Para mim só nós três está perfeito. Quando é que reservamos?
Sofia:	Today! How about we leave on the sixteenth?	Hoje mesmo! Que tal partirmos no dia dezasseis?
Inês:	Let's do it. I'm so excited!	Vamos a isso. Estou tão entusiasmada!

It's quiz time!

Did you spot all the ways to ask questions in that conversation? Let's test your knowledge with a quiz!

Which of these questions asks for directions?

- A. Quem é o gerente?
- B. Onde fica a estação?
- C. Quando é o jantar?

The correct answer is... Onde fica a estação? "Where is the station?"

How do you say 'when'?

- A. Como
- B. Quanto
- C. Quando

The correct answer is... Quando?

How do you spell 'why' as a standalone question?

- A. Por que?
- B. Porque?
- C. Porquê?

The correct answer is... Porquê? We use an accent when it's the only word in the question.

Your task

Well done for getting this far!

Now your task is to write three questions you would ask a new friend in Portugal. Have a look back at the conversation for some ideas.

Be sure to leave a like if you enjoyed this lesson and hit the subscribe button so you don't miss out on future videos. Our website is full of fun games across 7 languages, so head on over and put your skills to the test! Until next time, thanks for watching!