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'Be' is a very common verb in English. We use it to talk about many things, such as name, age, height, weight, time, place, weather, jobs, state, etc.



via <https://www.slideshare.net/LizethMancera/are-you-happy-today>

Negative forms of 'be' in Present Simple

To make negative sentences using be in the Present Simple, we just add '**not**' after the verb 'be'.

| Singular | Plural |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>I am not ('m not)</i> | <i>We are not (aren't)</i> |
| <i>You are not (aren't)</i> | <i>You are not (aren't)</i> |
| <i>He/she/is not (isn't)</i> | <i>They are not (aren't)</i> |

The verb 'be' takes the same form in positive and negative sentences. The only difference is that we add 'not'.

- *I'm **not** a pupil, I'm a student.*
- *They are not at home.*
- *She **isn't** in London, she's in Paris.*
- *We **aren't** happy about this.*

Note: "Is not" and "are not" can be contracted in two ways. The subject and verb can be contracted, or the verb and 'not'.

- *You are not a doctor. (full form)*
- *You're not a doctor.*
- *You aren't a doctor.*

- *She is not here right now. (full form)*
- *She isn't here right now.*
- *She's not here right now.*

There isn't/there aren't

When we want to make a negative impersonal statement with 'there is' or 'there are', we can add '**not**' or '**no**' depending on the noun that follows.











- **There is no** money in your wallet.
- **There aren't** any chairs at the table.
- **There isn't** enough food for everyone.

Questions with 'be' in Present Simple

To make questions with 'be' in the Present Simple, we put the verb before the subject and add a question mark at the end.

Compare positive statements and questions:

BE

| AM | IS | ARE |
|--|--|-----|
|  I am 10 years old. |  Am I 10 years old? | |
|  You are nice. |  Are you nice? | |
|  He is hungry. |  Is he hungry? | |
|  This is a bag. |  Is this a bag? | |
|  That is a pen. |  Is that a pen? | |

via <http://enriquetrujilloingles.blogspot.com/2014/05/verb-be-questions.html>

Yes/No questions

To create a question that will be answered with a 'yes' or 'no', put '**Am**'/'**Is**'/'**Are**' (or '**Isn't**'/'**Aren't**' for a negative question) + before the subject.

- **Are** you in the office? -No, I'm not. I'm still at home.
- **Is** she alone in New York City? - No, she isn't. She is with her boyfriend.
- Oh, **are** they happy to be there together?

Note: In short positive answers to the questions with the verb 'be' we use only full forms of

'am/is/are'. In short negative answers we can also use short forms of 'am/is/are'.

Special questions

Special questions (also known as wh-questions) are questions that require more information in their answers. They are made using [wh- words](#) such as **what, where, when, why, which, who, how, how many, how much**.

To make a special question, use the same word order as with yes-no questions but put a wh-word before the verb 'be'. The structure is:

wh- word + am/is/are + the rest of the sentence

- **Where is** your brother?
- **How are** you today?
- **Why are** you here?

The verb be may be contracted:

- **What's** your hobby?
- **Why's** your toy on the floor?

However, we usually do not contract a question word and the 'are' form of be:

- **Where are** you?
- Where're you? (not used in most situations)
- **When are** we leaving?
- When're we leaving? (not used in most situations)

Watch this video from Kyle Rolofson to see how the verb 'be' is used in questions and negative statements:

See also:

[The Verb 'Be' in Present Simple: Statements](#)