

Unit 51 Auxiliary verbs in short answers, short question etc.

So am I/Neither am I I think so/I hope so etc.

a Can you swim? I **have** lost my key. He **might** not come.

In these sentences **can**, **have** and **might** are *auxiliary* (= helping) verbs. We often use auxiliary verbs when we don't want to repeat something:

- 'Are you working tomorrow?' 'Yes, I **am**.' (= I am working tomorrow)
- He could lend us the money but he **won't**. (= he won't lend us money)

Use **do/does/did** for present and past simple short answers:

- 'Does he smoke?' 'He **did** but he **doesn't** any more.'
- 'It rained every day during our holiday.' 'Did it?'
- 'Ann isn't very well today.' 'Oh, **isn't** she?'
- 'I've just seen Tom.' 'Oh, **have** you? How is he?'

These short questions (**Did it?**, **isn't she?**, **have you?**) are not real questions. We use them to show polite interest in what someone has said and they help to keep the conversation going.

Sometimes we use short questions to show surprise:

- 'Jim and Nora are getting married.' 'Are they? Really?'

c We also use auxiliary verbs with **so** and **neither**:

- 'I'm feeling tired.' 'So **am** I.' (= I am feeling tired too)
- 'I never read newspapers.' 'Neither **do** I.' (= I never read them either)

Note the word order after **so** and **neither** (*verb* before *subject*):

- I passed the exam and **so did** Tom. (not 'so Tom did')

Nor can be used instead of **neither**:

- 'I can't remember his name.' 'Nor can I. / Neither can I.'

Not ... either can be used instead of **neither** and **nor**:

- 'I haven't got any money.' 'Neither have I.' or 'I haven't either.'

d I think so/hope so etc.

We use **so** in this way after a number of verbs, especially **think**, **hope**, **expect**, **suppose** and **I'm afraid**:

- 'Is she English?' 'I **think so**.'
- 'Will Tom come?' 'I **expect so**.'
- 'Has Ann been invited to the party?' 'I **suppose so**.'

The negative form depends on the verb:

I think so / I expect so - I **don't think so** / I **don't expect so**
I hope so / I'm afraid so - I **hope not** / I'm **afraid not**
I suppose so - I **don't suppose so** or I **suppose not**

- 'Is she American?' 'I **don't think so**.'
- 'Is it going to rain?' 'I **hope not**.' (not 'I don't hope so')