

Ask Questions

Whether you're engaged in conversation, reading, or listening to information, asking questions will help you gain a better understanding. When you formulate your own questions about a topic, you can be sure that you will find out what you need or want to know.

1 Scan information on a topic.

Quickly look through any information that you have about the topic. At this step, you do not need to worry about understanding every detail or taking careful notes.

2 Identify any details that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Look back at parts of the information that were confusing, unfamiliar, or especially interesting to you. Highlight or make a list of details that you don't understand or want to know more about.

3 Use your knowledge of the topic to formulate three or four questions you want answered.

For each detail that you listed, think of at least one question that you want to answer related to that detail. Consider what you already know about the topic and what information is missing.

4 Research the answers to your questions and identify any additional questions that arise.

Once you have made a list of questions, look for answers to your questions. If you look for written sources of information, use words and ideas from your questions as topics or search terms. Remember to stick to reliable sources and to read multiple sources, if possible. As you research answers to your questions, other questions may occur to you. You may want to do further research to answer those questions.