

So and not as substitutes for clauses, etc.

A

We can use **so** instead of repeating an adjective, adverb, or a whole clause:

Reminder → K10–K12

- The workers were angry and they had every right to be **so**. (= angry)
- Joe took the work seriously and Petra perhaps even more **so**. (= took the work seriously)
- Usman's giving us a lift. At least I presume **so**. (= that he's giving us a lift)

B

We often use **so** instead of a clause after verbs concerned with thinking and speaking:

- 'Is Lewis going back to Scotland to see his parents this summer?' 'I've no idea, but I'd **imagine so**. He goes most years.'
- I found it ridiculous, and **said so**. / ... and **told them so**. (= that I found it ridiculous)

Also: be afraid (expressing regret), **appear / seem** (after 'it'), **assume, believe, expect, guess, hope, presume, suppose, suspect, think**

Note that after 'tell' we include an indirect object.

We don't use **so** after certain other verbs:

- 'Will Stefan know how to mend it?' 'I **doubt** it. / I **doubt** (that) he will.' (not I doubt so.)

Also: accept, admit, agree, be certain, hear, know, promise, suggest, be sure

Note that in informal English, particularly in an argument, we can use 'I **know so**'.

C

In negative sentences, we use **not** or **not ... so**:

- Is the Socialist Party offering anything new in its statement? It would *appear not*.
- They want to buy the house, although they didn't *say so* directly.

We can use *either not* or **not ... so** with **appear, seem, suppose**:

- 'I don't suppose there'll be any seats left.' 'No, I **don't suppose so**.' (or ... I *suppose not*.)

We prefer **not ... so** with **believe, expect, imagine, think**. With these verbs, **not** is rather formal:

- 'Will we need to show our passports?' 'I **don't think so**.' (rather than I think not.)

We use **not** with **be afraid** (expressing regret), **assume, guess** (in the phrase 'I guess ...', = 'I think ...'), **hope, presume, suspect**:

- 'You'd better do it yourself. Eva won't help.' 'No, I **guess not**.' (not No, I don't guess so.)

Compare the use of **not (to)** and **not ... so** with **say**:

- 'Do we have to do all ten questions?' 'The teacher **said not**.' (= the teacher said that we didn't have to) or 'The teacher **said not to**.' (= the teacher said that we shouldn't)
- 'Do we have to do all ten questions?' 'The teacher **didn't say so**.' (= the teacher didn't say that we should do all ten, but perhaps we should)

D

We can use **so** in a short answer, instead of a short answer with 'Yes, ...', when we want to say that we can see that something is true now that we have been told, particularly if we are surprised. In answers like this we use **so + pronoun + auxiliary verb** (*be, can, etc.*):

- 'Lisa and Sara are here.' '**So they are**.' (or **Yes, they are**.) (= I can now see that, too)

However, if we already know something we use 'Yes, ...', not 'So ...'. Compare:

- 'Your bike's been moved.' '**So it has**. / **Yes, it has**. I wonder who did it.' (= I didn't know before you told me) *and*
- 'Your bike's been moved.' '**Yes, it has**. Philip borrowed it this morning.' (= I knew before you told me; *not* So it has.)

E

We can use **so** in a similar way in short answers with verbs such as **appear** (after 'it'), **believe, gather, hear, say, seem, tell** (e.g. *So she tells me.*), **understand**. However, with these verbs, the pattern implies 'I knew before you told me':

- 'I found that lecture really boring.' '**So I gather** (= I knew that). I saw you sleeping.'

Exercises

62.1 If possible, complete the dialogues with **so**. If not, use an appropriate **that-clause**. **B**

- 1 A: Is Zak ill again? B: Well, he hasn't come to work, so I assume so.
- 2 A: Will we need to pay to get in? B: I doubt that we will.
- 3 A: Will you be able to come over this weekend? B: I hope
- 4 A: Can you give me a lift to work? B: I suppose
- 5 A: Is this one by Van Gogh, too? B: I think
- 6 A: Apparently Carol's getting married again. B: Yes, I hear
- 7 A: The weather's awful, so we'll need to take a taxi. B: I guess
- 8 A: Will the decorator be finished this week? B: He says
- 9 A: You will remember to pick me up at one, won't you? B: I promise
- 10 A: I hope I'll be able to get a ticket. B: I'm sure

62.2 Underline all the correct **B** responses. **B & C**

- 1 A: With the children being ill I haven't had time to do much housework.
B: No, I *suppose not* / *don't suppose* / *don't suppose so*.
- 2 A: Did I leave my handbag in your car yesterday?
B: I *don't think* / *don't think so* / *think not*.
- 3 A: I'm sure the bank has charged me too much. Will they refund the money?
B: I *don't suspect* / *suspect not* / *don't suspect so*.
- 4 A: Didn't Alice hear you? B: It *doesn't appear so* / *appears not* / *doesn't appear*.
- 5 A: What did you think of Sadia's work?
B: Well, I thought it was pretty awful, although I *didn't say so* / *said not* / *said so*.

62.3 Complete B's responses with short answers beginning **Yes, ...** . If possible, give an alternative response with **So** **D**



- 1 A: That horse is walking with a limp.
B: Yes, it is. / So it is. Perhaps we should tell the owner.
- 2 A: The children from next door are taking the apples from our trees.
B: I said they could come round and get them.
- 3 A: The DVD player's gone again. B: Dr Adams has probably borrowed it.
- 4 A: I told you I'd be late for work today.
B: I agree. But you didn't say *how* late – it's nearly two.

62.4 Choose any appropriate short answer beginning **So ...** to respond to A's comments below, to say that B already knew what is being said. Use the verbs in **E** opposite. **E**

- 1 A: My car won't start again. B: So I hear.
- 2 A: Maria's not very well. B:
- 3 A: The class has been cancelled again. B:
- 4 A: I see income tax is going up. B:
- 5 A: Fred's moving to Berlin. B: