THE IMPERATIVE MOOD
Eighteenth lesson – Dix-huitième leçon
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1. DEFINITION

- The imperative mood (le mode impératif) is used to express **commands**: making a request, giving an order, expressing a desire, offering advice, giving a recommendation.
2. Uses

2.1 Informal & formal commands

- To make an informal command, use the familiar *tu* form of the verb:
  - *Entre!*  
  - *Come in!*
2. **Uses**

- To make a formal command, use the polite form **vous** (one or more persons) form of the verb:
  - *Entrez!*  
  - *Come in!*
2. USES

2.2. The subject pronoun is not used with the imperative mood

- *Entrer* (to enter)
  - *Entre!* Enter! (talking to «you» informally)
  - *Entrez!* Enter! (talking to «you» formally – or to more persons – formally.)
2. Uses

- Except with pronominal verbs:
  - *Se lever* (to get up)
    - *Levons-nous!*  
      - Let’s (us) get up!
    - *Ne nous levons pas!*  
      - Let’s not get up!

- In both the above sentences the use of the subject pronoun is compulsory.
3. REGULAR FORMS

There are only three grammatical persons that can be conjugated in the imperative: tu, nous, and vous, and their conjugations are quite simple.

- Entre!
- Entraînons!
- Entrez!
3. Regular forms

i) –ir and –re verbs

- In regular and most irregular -ir and -re verbs, the forms of the imperative are the same as the corresponding persons in the indicative present tense.
3. Regular forms

Example:

- Tu *finis* ton travail. → *Finis* ton travail!
- You finish your work. → Finish your work!
3. **Regular forms**

**ii**) Verbs like *ouvrire* and *souffrir* are conjugated like -*er* verbs, thus, in the indicative the **tu** form ends in *-es*.

- **Nous** and **vous** of the imperative are the same as the indicative form.
3. Regular forms

- For example when conjugating *manger* in the imperative mood, the **tu** form drops the final *-s*.
  - *Tu manges* vite. → *Mange* vite!
  - You eat quickly. → Eat quickly!
## 3.1 Overview of regular imperative patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parler (<em>to speak</em>)</th>
<th>Finir (<em>to finish</em>)</th>
<th>Attendre (<em>to wait</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tu</strong></td>
<td>parle</td>
<td>finis</td>
<td>attends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nous</strong></td>
<td>parlons</td>
<td>finissons</td>
<td>attendons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vous</strong></td>
<td>parlez</td>
<td>finissez</td>
<td>attendez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Forms: irregular verbs

There are four verbs with irregular forms in the imperative mood.

- Avoir to have
- Être to be
- Savoir to know/to be familiar with
- Vouloir to want
# Overview of Irregular Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Avoir (to have)</th>
<th>Être (to be)</th>
<th>Savoir (to know)</th>
<th>Vouloir (to want)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tu</strong></td>
<td>aie</td>
<td>sois</td>
<td>sache</td>
<td>veuille</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nous</strong></td>
<td>ayons</td>
<td>soyons</td>
<td>sachons</td>
<td>voulons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vous</strong></td>
<td>Ayez</td>
<td>soyez</td>
<td>sachez</td>
<td>veuillez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples:

- **Sois courageux!**  
  Be brave!

- **Ayons du courage!**  
  Let’s be brave!
5. **Imperative Negative of Verbs**

To form a **negative imperative** place **ne** before the verb and **pas** (or another adverb, *e.g.*, *jamais*, *plus*, *encore*) after it.

- **Ne parle pas!**  
  Don’t speak
- **N’ayez jamais peur!**  
  Never be afraid!
6. Imperative of pronominal verbs

6.1 In the affirmative imperative the reflexive subject pronoun *te* changes to *toi* and is linked by a hyphen to the verbal form. See the following example:

- Present tense:  
  Tu te lèves.  
  You are getting up.

- Imperative mood: Lève-toi!  
  Get up!
6. IMPERATIVE OF PRONOMINAL VERBS

6.2 In the **negative** imperative sentences however the reflexive subject pronoun **te** remains **te** and must be placed **before** verbal form.

- Present tense:  **Tu ne te lèves pas?**  
  Aren’t you getting up?

- Imperative mood: **Ne te lève pas!**  
  Don’t get up!
7. PARTICULARITIES

Using the pronouns y or en

- Note that when a tu command is followed by the pronouns y or en, the final -s is kept in order to aid pronunciation.

- Vas-y! Go (away)!
- Parles-en! Talk about it!
C’est tout pour aujourd’hui!

Au revoir!

Merci!