

The imperative form

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Using the imperative form

- ▶ You can use the imperative form to give an order, to give a warning or advice, and (if you use "please") to make a request.
- ▶ To make the imperative, use the infinitive of the verb without 'to':
 - ▶ "Come here!"
"Sit down!"
 - ▶ To make a negative imperative, put "do not" or "don't" before the verb:
 - ▶ "Don't go!"
"Do not walk on the grass."
- ▶ The imperative can be used for all subjects (you, he, they and we), but you can also use "let's" before the verb if you are including yourself in the imperative:
 - ▶ "Let's stop now."
"Let's have some lunch."
 - ▶ The negative of "let's" is "let's not":
 - ▶ "Let's not argue!"
"Let's not tell her about it."

Orders

- ▶ Adults do not usually give each other orders, unless they are in a position of authority. The intonation of an order is important: each word is stressed, and the tone falls at the end of the sentence:
- ▶ "Sit down now!" ('Sit', 'down' and 'now' are all stressed, and the tone falls on 'now'.)
- ▶ However, adults can give orders to children and to animals:
- ▶ Here are some orders you could give your pet dog:
 - "Come here!"
 - "Sit!"
 - "Heel!"
 - "Fetch!"

Warnings

- ▶ You can use the imperative to warn someone of danger. All the words in the warning are stressed, but the last word has a higher tone than the first word:
 - ▶ "Watch out!"
 - ▶ "Look out!"
 - ▶ "Don't cross!"

Advice

- ▶ When you give advice using the imperative, the words are stressed normally:
 - ▶ "Eat an apple – it's much better for you than a biscuit!"
 - ▶ "Don't tell him you're resigning now! Wait until Monday when he's in a better mood."
- ▶ You can often read articles in magazines that give advice on a subject. Sometimes, this advice is presented as "Dos and don'ts".
 - ▶ For example:
 - **Travelling long-distance**
 - Do try to sleep well the night before
 - Do drink plenty of water
 - Do try to walk about the plane during the flight
 - Don't drink alcohol
 - Don't eat heavy meals
 - Don't wear restrictive clothing

Requests

- ▶ You can also use the imperative to make a request, but you should use a polite word before the verb:
 - ▶ "Please take a seat."
 - ▶ "Please wait here."
 - ▶ "Please hold the line."
 - ▶ "Please don't smoke here."
- ▶ In written English, you might also see "Kindly" used as a polite word:
 - ▶ "Kindly return the documents as soon as possible."
 - ▶ "Kindly forward this to the Sales and Marketing department."
 - ▶ "Kindly send me 2 copies of your brochure."