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# Introduction to Moods

## What is mood in English language?

*Some grammarians say there are three moods and some say there are four.*

Mood (sometimes called "mode") is a grammatical characteristic of English verbs that expresses a speaker's or writer's feeling of a particular kind about the verb in the sentence in which the verb occurs. **"Indicative"** is much the most common mood, because it is used for assertions of fact or alleged fact. **"Imperative"** mood expresses commands to or requests of the person addressed. **"Subjunctive"** mood expresses allegations or possibilities that the speaker or writer believes may be true but does not state as a fact, or allegations known to the speaker or writer to be untrue and not expected to be believed by the hearer or reader but stated for contrast or illustration. **"Infinitive Mood"** mood expresses an action or state without reference to any subject. It can be the source of sentence fragments when the writer mistakenly thinks the infinitive form is a fully-functioning verb.

*We will discuss all four on the next slides.*



# The Indicative Mood



***"We finished the project on time."***

We use the indicative mood to express a fact, to deny a fact or to ask a question.

The majority of the statements that are made in English are in the indicative mood.

*Indicative* means "stating a fact."



We use the indicative mood to make factual statements.

*The chair is red.*

*Jim works downtown.*

*The book is in the kitchen.*

*She is making lunch.*

*Mary bought a green skirt.*

*Bill left last week.*

*We have lived in Boston for six years.*



The questions that we make are in the indicative mood.

*Is the paint dry?*

*Are your shoes in the closet?*

*Do you like chicken soup?*

*Did Mary arrive?*

*When is the meeting?*

*Where did you go last night?*

*What do you want to order?*

*Why did he do it?*

*Who's at the door?*

*Have you ever been to London?*



We can deny a fact by using the indicative mood.

*She isn't here.*

*They aren't going to the lake.*

*He doesn't like spinach.*

*I didn't read the book.*

*We haven't finished the report.*



We use the indicative mood in all the major verb tenses.

Present: *He **reads** the newspaper everyday.*

Past: *He **left** the office at five o'clock.*

Future: *I **will call** him tomorrow.\**

Present Perfect: *He **has worked** in the company for ten years.*

Past Perfect: *She **had cleaned** the apartment before they came.*

Future Perfect: *He **will have finished** the report before Friday.*

\*Using **will** to communicate the future is not universally considered a verb tense, but the use of the modal auxiliary to form a future intention.





With the modal auxiliaries in the indicative mood, we can express permission, possibility, ability, necessity, or suggestion. We use the modal verbs *may, might, can, could, must and should* in the potential form.

Permission: You ***may*** board the plane.

Possibility: It ***might*** rain this afternoon.

Ability: Mary ***can*** play the piano.

Necessity: You ***must*** lock the door when you leave.

Suggestion: You ***should*** read a book more often.



We sometimes see or hear an emphatic form of the indicative mood that gives emphasis to the verb. This form is usually in the affirmative simple present and simple past tenses using the auxiliaries *do*, *does*, *did*.

*I **do study** every night.*

*He **did deliver** the letter.*

*She **does see** her mistake now.*

*We **did win** the championship.*

*They **did arrive** on time.*



# The Imperative Mood



***"Get plenty of rest!"***

We use the imperative mood to make a command or request.

The imperative mood in English usually occurs in the second person. The second person subject pronoun, *you*, is *not* used but is implied.



In the simplest sense, we can form a strong imperative statement using just one word.

*Eat!*

*Work!*

*Leave!*

It is very common to see a phrasal verb with a particle.

*Come in.*

*Sit down.*

*Stand up.*

*Get up.*



An imperative statement can use other words.

*Come to my house at five.*

*Take off your coat.*

*Give me the book.*

We can make the imperative statement milder by using the word *please* or the name of the person.

*Pass me the salt, please.*

*Please, sit down.*

*Do me this favor, please.*

*Read this report, Bill.*

*Mary, bring me a cup of coffee.*



It is common to use the imperative mood to form a prohibition using the negative auxiliary "*Don't*".

*Don't do that.*

*Don't eat so fast.*

*Don't tell them our secret.*

*Don't drive so fast.*



# The Subjunctive Mood



***"I wish I had some cheese..."***

*Subjunctive* means "**subordinate**" (less important than something else) or "**dependent**" (needing something/someone else).

The *subjunctive mood* is a category of verb forms that we use to express things that are not facts:

wishes, possibilities, doubts, suggestions, conditions, etc.



We can use the subjunctive to make formal commands or requests. Some of the common verbs used in this situation are:

*suggest, beg, demand, ask, insist, prefer and recommend.* The noun clause that contains the subjunctive begins with *that* (Relative Pronoun) . Also notice that the verb form in the subjunctive does not have a letter "s" in the third person of the present tense and that the verb "to be" is used as "*be*".

*We suggested that he **leave**.*

*He begged that she **give** him the money.*

*He demanded that they **tell** him the truth.*

*We asked that they **be** on time.*

*We insist that they **be** quiet.*

*I prefer that she **work** on Saturday.*

*He recommends that we **go** in July.*





The previous form of the subjunctive mood is usually used in formal situations. Look at the following examples of informal ways to basically say the same thing using the indicative mood.

Subjunctive: *They asked that he **bring** the report.*

Informal: *They asked him **to bring** the report.*

Subjunctive: *He prefers that we **visit** her on Sunday.*

Informal: *He would like us **to visit** her on Sunday.*

Subjunctive: *He recommended that we **buy** a new stove.*

Informal: *He thinks that we **should buy** a new stove.*

Subjunctive: *She insisted that we **be** quiet.*

Informal: *She told us **to be** quiet.*



We use the subjunctive mood in subordinate clauses which are attached to a principle clause with an adjective that shows a sense of necessity or urgency. Some of the typical adjectives in this situation are: *important, necessary, urgent, imperative and essential*.

*It is important that he **take** the medicine.*

*(It's important to take the medicine. It's important for him to take the medicine.)*

*It is necessary that she **study** English.*

*It is urgent that we **send** the letter.*

*It is imperative that they **attend** the conference.*

*It is essential that you **talk** with the manager before the meeting.*



The previous form of the subjunctive mood is usually used in formal situations. Look at the following examples of informal ways to basically say the same thing using the indicative mood.

Subjunctive: *It is important that he **read** the book.*

Informal: *It is important **to read** the book.*

Subjunctive: *It is necessary that you **eat** three meals a day.*

Informal: *It is necessary **to eat** three meals a day.*

Informal: *You **should eat** three meals a day.*



It is common to use the subjunctive in wish statements that use the verb *wish* in the principle clause followed by a subordinate noun clause. This type of statement usually expresses unreal or untrue situations and is used in present, past and future situations.

**Present Wish-** In this case we are expressing a wish or desire which is untrue. We use the past subjunctive in the subordinate clause. The main wish clause is in the present tense.

*She wishes that she **were** rich.*

*I wish that it **were** summer.*

*They wish that they **had** a new car.*

*I wish I **understood** French.*

(In this case, we do not use the relative pronoun, *that*.)



**Past Wish** - Here, we are referring to a past situation that did not happen but was desired. In the subordinate clause, we use the past perfect subjunctive which is the same as the past perfect indicative. The wish clause can be in the present or past tense depending on the situation.

*I wish I **had watched** the program last night.*

*We wished he **had called** us yesterday.*

*They wished that they **had gone** to the concert.*

**Future Wish** - This situation expresses a future wish or desire. There is a sense or implication that the wish is improbable. In this case, we use the modal auxiliary *would* (or *could*) to express the subjunctive in the future. The wish clause is in the present tense.

*I wish that he **would change** his mind.*

*We wish they **would finish** the work.*

*He wishes she **would read** the book.*

*I wish I **could help** you tomorrow.*

*We wish you **could come** to the party.*



We use a condition with *if* to express a situation that is contrary to fact.

**Present or Future** - In this case, we are expressing a condition which is contrary to fact in the present or future. The main clause uses the indicative mood with *would* (or *could*) and the conditional (or subordinate) clause uses the past subjunctive (which is like the past tense)

*She would drive to work if she had a car.*

(She doesn't have a car so she can't drive to work.)

*If I had the money, I would buy a new computer.*

*If I were interested, I would read the book.*

*She would give us the information if she were here.*

(She isn't here so she can't give us the information.)

*I could go if I had the time.*

*If I were you, I would call her.*



**Past** - If an improbable or false conditional situation existed in the past, we use the past perfect in the subordinate clause and the present perfect with *would* (or *could*, *should*) in the main clause.

*If I had seen him, I would have spoken to him.*

*If you had left earlier, we would have arrived on time.*

*I would have understood if I had read the book.*

*He could have passed the exam if he had studied harder.*

*I should have gone but I didn't have enough money.*



You will often hear and read some small common phrases that have been used for centuries and are still used with a distinctive subjunctive. These expressions usually refer to kings, queens and God.

*God save the Queen.*

*God bless you.*

*Heaven forbid.*

*Long live the King.*

*God be with you.*

*God help him.*





Subjunctive present	verb 'to work'	verb 'to be'	verb 'to have'
	I work	I be	I have
	You work	You be	You have
	He / She / It work	He / She / It be	He / She / It have
	We work	We be	We have
	You work	You be	You have
	They work	They be	They have



After these verbs:

ask , command, demand, insist , order,

advise , propose, request , suggest , recommend

and these words: it is crucial / essential / important / necessary /  
vital (+ that)



It is important **that** Sarah **be** on time for the interview.



### Other examples

Dad asks **that** she **come** immediately.

It is essential **that** he **be** here tomorrow.

It is vital **that** John **take** those pills twice a day.

Mum demands **that** Peter **get** home before dark.



The teacher suggested **that** Bob **study** harder.

### Negative form

Fred advises that Sue **not take** this job, it is too dangerous.

### Passive voice

Tom recommended that Yan **be allowed** to join the tennis team.



# Idioms:



When somebody sneezes you say:

(God) **Bless** you !



'**God Bless America**'  
is an American  
patriotic song  
written by Irving  
Berlin (1918)

God **save** the Queen! Long **live** the King!

**If need be** I can do the job myself.

**Come what may** I will love you until my dying day.

**Far be it from me** to tell you what to do! but I think...





**Aladin: I want a huge palace with a thousand servants and a swimming pool.**

**Genie: So be it!**

## Subjunctive past

verb 'to work'

verb 'to be'

I worked

I **were**

You worked

You were

-

He / She / It worked

He / She / It **were**

We worked

We were

You worked

You were

They worked

They were



**After: If, suppose, imagine, as if, if only**

Examples

John behaves as if **he were** a baby. ( But he is not a baby)

If only **I were** a bird  
my days would be forever happy...



If I **were** you I would choose the red one.



## After the verb: 'to wish'

I wish Mark **were** here today.

He wishes he **weren't** working so hard.

I wish I **were** twenty again.



**Ryan is lonely, he wishes he had some friends.**



# The Infinitive Mood

**Infinitive Mood:** expresses an action or state without reference to any subject. It can be the source of sentence fragments when the writer mistakenly thinks the infinitive form is a fully-functioning verb.

When we speak of the English infinitive, we usually mean the basic form of the verb with “to” in front of it: *to go, to sing, to walk, to speak*

Verbs said to be in the infinitive mood can include participle forms ending in -ed and -ing. Verbs in the infinitive mood are not being used as verbs, but as other parts of speech:

*To err is human; to forgive, divine.* Here, *to err* and *to forgive* are used as nouns.

He is a man *to be admired*. Here, *to be admired* is an adjective, the equivalent of *admirable*. It describes the noun *man*.

*He came to see you.* Here, *to see you* is used as an adverb to tell why he came.





# Exercises

## Vocabulary Exercise

Fill in the Blank

Look at the picture and decide which word from the list best describes the picture.



dazed

**proud**



dazed

**light-hearted**



dazed

**dazed**



dazed

**happy**

**Show Answers**





dazed

**pleased**



dazed

**teasing**



dazed

**dubious**



dazed

**thoughtful**

**Show Answers**





dazed

**dumbstruck**



dazed

**ill-tempered**



dazed

**unhappy**



dazed

**angry**

**Show Answers**



**Write the verb in brackets in the subjunctive (3 negative forms, 2 passive forms).**



It is essential that Lucy  
tables. (to learn)

her multiplication

learn



If only I  
(to be)

able to read Chinese!

were

Show Answers





It is important that you  too  
much alcohol before driving. (to drink)  
**not drink**



Sorry, the cake is burnt! I wish I  a  
better cook. (to be)  
**were**



In Phoebe's school it is necessary that every  
student  a uniform. (to wear)  
**wear**

**Show Answers**





Bob's grandfather is ill. It is urgent that  
Bob  at once. (to  
warn)

**be warned**



**not enter**

The monks insisted that the tourists  
 the temple with  
their shoes on. (to enter)



It's too cold here. I wish I   
in a warmer country. (to live) **lived**

**Show Answers**





It is recommended that you   
after eating a large meal. (to swim) **not swim**



Mr. Mason demands that the heater  
 immediately. His  
room is freezing. (to repair)  
**be repaired**

**Show Answers**

