

# What Is A Mood In Grammar?

In grammar, **mood** is used to refer to a verb category or form which indicates whether the verb expresses a fact (the **indicative mood**), a command (the **imperative mood**), a question (the **interrogative mood**), a condition (the **conditional mood**), or a wish or possibility (the **subjunctive mood**).

## The indicative mood

The form of a verb that is used to express statements of fact:

- *Whales **are** mammals, not fish.*
- *We **will visit** Peru and Chile next year.*
- *She **liked** Jack as soon as she met him.*
- *They're **meeting** us tomorrow morning.*

## The imperative mood

The imperative is used in commands and instructions. Imperatives in the affirmative are formed with the infinitive of the verb (without *to*), while negative imperatives are made with the infinitive together with *do + not*. The imperative doesn't typically have a subject. It's used to order or ask someone to do something, to offer advice or encouragement, to give instructions, or to make suggestions:

- ***Take** the first turn on the left.*
- *Just **keep** calm and **relax**.*
- ***Be** quiet!*
- ***Don't forget** your keys.*
- ***Have** a great holiday.*

## The interrogative mood

This mood is used to ask questions. Interrogatives are formed by adding an auxiliary verb to another verb, with the auxiliary verb typically being placed before the subject:

- ***Are** you **coming** out tonight?*
- *When **is** she **leaving**?*

- Where **have** they **gone**?
- **Did** you **make** a profit?

## The conditional mood

The conditional mood is made from the auxiliary verb *would* (also *should* with *I* and *we*) and the infinitive of the other verb without *to*. It's used to make requests and to refer to situations which are uncertain or which depend on something else happening or being the case:

- *I **would like** some coffee please.*
- *If he'd arrived earlier, we **would have had** time for dinner.*
- *We **would live** in Spain if we had the money.*

## The subjunctive mood

The **subjunctive** mood is used to express a wish or possibility. This mood has a limited role in English compared to other languages such as French or Italian, but it's important to use it properly in formal writing.

The subjunctive form of a verb (apart from *to be*) is made from the 3<sup>rd</sup> person present singular, without the *-s* (or *-es*) ending. With these verbs, the same forms are used whether or not the context is the present or the past.

The subjunctive of *to be* is simply *be* in most cases, but *were* is used in certain constructions with *if* and to express a wish (see below).

The subjunctive is typically found in rather formal English constructions with *that* and with verbs such as *suggest*, *demand*, *insist*, *ask*, *recommend*, etc.:

- *It was suggested that he **wait** till the next morning.*
- *They demanded that the prime minister **explain** who authorized the action.*

The ordinary, indicative forms of the verbs in these examples would be *waits* and *explains* but it would be grammatically incorrect to use them in these cases:

- ✗ *It was suggested that he **waits** till the next morning.*
- ✗ *They demanded that the prime minister **explains** who authorized the action.*

Here are the other main uses of the subjunctive:

after *if*, *as if*, *as though*, and *unless*, in sentences that state a hypothetical condition, or with the verb *to wish*:

- *If I **were** taller, I would have been a model.*
- *I wish I **were** more confident.*

*be* and *were* are used at the beginning of sentences or clauses when the subject follows:

- ***Were** I to make a list of my favourite films, this would be in second place.*
- *All books, **be** they fiction or non-fiction, should provide entertainment.*

in certain fixed expressions, for example '*be that as it may*', '*come what may*', and '*so be it*'.

# Basic Verb Mood

## Mood of a Verb

### Definition

the form a verb takes to show whether it is a fact, a command, a wish, etc.

#### 1 The Indicative Mood

states a fact or asks a question



This broom **is** fast. **Do** you want a go?



**Keep** away from the sunlight.

Don't **eat** garlic!

#### 2 The Imperative Mood

expresses an order

#### 3 The Subjunctive Mood

shows a wish, a suggestion, or possible condition



If I **were** alive, I'd demand that I **be** at the party.