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The imperative, (**l'impératif** in French) is used to give commands, orders, or express wishes, like 'Stop!', 'Listen!' You may recognize the imperative from commands such as 'Ecoutez' or 'Répétez'. It is one of four **moods** in the French language. Unlike the other moods, the imperative is not divided into tenses. Keep in mind that the imperative is a very direct way to give an order. It is often replaced with more polite alternatives like the **conditional**.

#### formation

There are three forms of the imperative: **tu**, **nous** and **vous**. For all verbs, the imperative is formed by taking the corresponding forms of the **present indicative**, but without subject pronouns. The lack of a subject pronoun is what identifies the imperative mood.



finir 'to finish'		
present	imperative	translation
tu finis	<b>finis</b>	finish (you, familiar)
nous finissons	<b>finissons</b>	let's finish
vous finissez	<b>finissez</b>	finish

The **tu** form is used to give an order to a child or when the speaker is on familiar terms with the person addressed. The **vous** form is used to give an order to a group of people or to address one person in the **vous** form. The **nous** form is used to give an order that involves oneself as well as others, though it often expresses a suggestion as its translation (Let's ... ) indicates.

Drop the final **s** in the **tu** forms of the imperative for **-er** verbs, including **aller**, and **-ir** verbs like **ouvrir** and other verbs whose present indicative form of **tu** ends in **-es**:

present	imperative	translation
tu regardes	<b>regarde</b>	look
tu ouvres	<b>ouvre</b>	open
tu vas	<b>va</b>	go

When these forms are followed by the pronoun **y** or **en**, the **-s** is reattached for pronunciation purposes. For example:



Corey: Bette, **va** au supermarché! **Vas-y!** Et **achète** de l'insecticide pour moi ... Tu m'entends? **Achètes-en** pour moi!

Bette: Imbécile, l'insecticide est dangereux pour les cafards! Paf!

Corey: Oh, Bette ... aide-moi à me relever, s'il te plaît.

Bette: Tu es vraiment trop bête. Je m'en vais.

Corey: Bette, go to the supermarket! Go there! And buy some insecticide for me ... Do you hear me? Buy some for me!


Bette: Imbecile, insecticide is dangerous for cockroaches! Pow!

Corey: Oh, Bette, help me back up, please.

Bette: You are really too stupid. I'm leaving.

### irregular imperatives

There are several verbs that have irregular imperative forms.

	<b>avoir</b>	<b>être</b>	<b>savoir</b>	<b>vouloir</b>
	<b>ai</b>	<b>sois</b>	<b>sache</b>	<b>veuille</b>
	<b>ayons</b>	<b>soyons</b>	<b>sachons</b>	<b>veuilions</b>
	<b>ayez</b>	<b>soyez</b>	<b>sachez</b>	<b>veuillez</b>


### imperative of pronominal verbs

For **pronominal verbs**, the subject pronoun is dropped and the object pronoun is placed after the verb and is attached with a hyphen. **Te** becomes **toi** in this situation.

	<b>se souvenir 'to remember'</b>		
	<b>present</b>	<b>imperative</b>	<b>translation</b>
	tu te souviens	<b>souviens-toi</b>	remember
	nous nous souvenons	<b>souvenons-nous</b>	let's remember
	vous vous souvenez	<b>souvenez-vous</b>	remember

### negative commands


The forms of the **affirmative** imperative (an order to do something) have been presented in the above charts. In **negative** commands (an order **not** to do something), place the **ne ... pas** around the imperative, as in **Ne regarde pas** ('Don't look'). In negative commands for reflexive verbs, the object pronoun is placed in front of the verb.

	Corey: <b>Ne te moque pas</b> de moi!	Corey: Don't make fun of me!
	Joe-Bob: <b>Ne nous moquons pas</b> de Corey!	Joe-Bob: Let's not make fun of Corey!



### pronoun object with imperatives

Other non-pronominal pronoun objects follow the same placement as objects of pronominal verbs. As usual, the subject pronoun is dropped. In the negative, the **ne** precedes the object pronoun and the verb. In the affirmative imperative, the pronoun object follows the verb, and the forms **moi** and **toi** replace **me** and **te**.

	Corey: <b>Aidez-moi, aidez-moi!</b> Je n'arrive pas à me relever.	Corey: Help me, help me! I can't get back up.
	Joe-Bob: <b>Retournons-le!</b> Allez, un, deux, trois ... Doucement, doucement. <b>Ne le faites pas</b> trop vite!	Joe-Bob: Let's turn him. Let's go, one, two, three ... Slowly, slowly. Don't do it too fast!

Listen to the following dialogue:



Corey: Merci, tout le monde. Ça va beaucoup mieux. **Allons** à Barton Springs cet après-midi.

Joe-Bob: D'accord, mais **écoute**, d'abord je dois mettre mon maillot.

Corey: Oui, bien sûr, mais **dépêche-toi**.

Joe-Bob: J'arrive. **N'oublions pas** l'insecticide. Il y a tant d'insectes empoisonnants en ce moment!

Corey: Eh moi alors?

Joe-Bob: Oh, pas toi, Corey. Tu n'es jamais empoisonnant!

Corey: Thanks, everybody. That's much better. Let's go to Barton Springs this afternoon.

Tammy: Okay, but listen, first I have to put on my swimsuit.

Tex: Yes, of course, but hurry.

Joe-Bob: I'm coming. Let's not forget the insecticide. There are so many irritating insects now.

Corey: And me?

Joe-Bob: Oh, not you, Corey. You are never irritating!



Exercices

### fill in the blanks

Fill in the blank with the imperative form of the verb between parentheses.

1. Tex : \_\_\_\_\_ Tammy! On étaient si heureux à Lyon! (se rappeler)
2. Tammy : Tex, \_\_\_\_\_ tes légumes! (finir)
3. Tex : \_\_\_\_\_ de nous disputer! (arrêter)
4. Tammy : \_\_\_\_\_ prétentieux, Tex! (ne pas être)
5. Tex et Tammy : \_\_\_\_\_ rester modestes! (savoir)
6. Tammy : \_\_\_\_\_ chez le coiffeur Tex! (aller)
7. Tammy : Tu as envie d'aller chez Bette, Tex? \_\_\_\_\_-y! (aller)
8. Tammy : J'achète du vin? Tex : Oui, \_\_\_\_\_-en plusieurs bouteilles! (acheter)
9. Tammy : Ta maison n'est pas propre Tex! \_\_\_\_\_ tes affaires! (ranger)
10. Tammy : Edouard, Corey, \_\_\_\_\_ ! Vous allez être en retard! (se dépêcher)
11. Tex : Edouard, Corey, ceci est secret! \_\_\_\_\_ à Tammy! (ne pas parler)
12. Tex : Chers amis, \_\_\_\_\_ tous à mon anniversaire! (venir)