

# The English Imperative

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[The imperative](#) grammar exercises and rules are available for free on [English grammar - tenses and verbs](#) (www.e-grammar.org).

## The second person imperative

We can express commands in English by the imperative made with the infinitive without *to*.  
*Be careful. Open your books. Come here.*

For the negative commands we put *do not* or *don't* before the imperative.  
*Don't be late. Do not sit down. Don't have so many bags.*

We can mention the person in the command, usually at the end of the sentence.  
*Have something to eat, Greg. Gregu, dej si něco k jídlu.*

If we talk to more people, we use the pronoun *you* to make the distinction between them.  
*You take these bags and you park the car. You wait here and I'll call the police.*

## Emphatic imperative

In writing it is not usual to use an exclamation mark in the imperative. If we put it at the end of the command, it becomes more urgent.  
*Wait! Don't do that!*

We can make an emphatic imperative with *do* and imperative. It is common in polite requests.  
*Do sit down. Do be reasonable.*

On the other hand, *do* before the imperative can express the irritation of the speaker.  
*Do be quiet. Do come on time.*

*You* before the imperative also shows the speaker's anger or even rudeness.  
*You get out of here. Don't you follow me.*

In a different context, however, it can show your positive emotions.  
*Don't you be so sad.*

## The first person imperative

The English language makes the first person imperative with *let + me* or *let + us*.  
*Let me do it for you. Let me see.*  
*Let us go. Let's take our car.*

For the negative we put *not* before the imperative.  
*Let us not be worried.*

In spoken English it is possible to use *don't* at the beginning of the sentence.  
*Don't let's be worried.*

## The third person imperative

We make it with *let + him/her/it/them* and the infinitive without *to*.  
*Let him go. Let her explain it. Let it be. Let them try it. Let the customers pay immediately.*

This form is not very common in modern English. It is more usual to say the same in a different way.  
*He must go. She should explain it. Leave it alone. They can try it. The customers must pay immediately.*

The negative imperative in the third person is archaic. We use more common forms instead.  
*They mustn't stay here. Mary is not to travel alone.*

## **Polite requests**

We can make a polite request in English if we put *shall we* or *will you* at the end of the imperative. This is used in positive requests.

*Let's get started, shall we? Be careful, will you?*

If you want to be even more polite, you can use questions instead of commands.

*Will you pass me the salt, please? Will you help me? Could you do it for me? Would you mind opening the window?*