

Commands

The command form, also called the imperative, is used to tell someone to do or not to do something. The command form is considered a mood, and exists only in the immediate present. The Spanish affirmative command is equivalent to English commands, such as *turn here* or *follow the directions*. The Spanish negative command is equivalent to English *don't scream* or *don't drink the water*, for example. Except for the affirmative **tú** command, all the constructions use a form that is the same as the present subjunctive, so your knowledge of the subjunctive is a great help.

Even though there are other ways to request that people do things, the command form is necessary in many situations. For example, let's say you need to give someone directions:

Go straight ahead, and then **turn** to the right.

Follow the red line.

Walk in the direction of the traffic.

Sometimes you need the command form to tell people not to do something, and you don't have very much time to do it in.

Don't touch the light socket!

Don't jump in the water—there are sharks!

Don't move.

Don't worry.

Affirmative *tú* Commands

The affirmative command form in the familiar **tú** is the same as the third-person singular of the present indicative. If the third-person indicative form is irregular, so is the command form.

-Ar Verbs

REGULAR IN THE PRESENT	Baila. Canta. Mira. Escucha.	<i>Dance. Sing. Look. Listen.</i>
IRREGULAR IN THE PRESENT	Empieza. Piensa.	<i>Begin. Think.</i>

-Er and -ir Verbs

REGULAR IN THE PRESENT	Come. Bebe. Lee. Escribe. Decide.	<i>Eat. Drink. Read. Write. Decide.</i>
IRREGULAR IN THE PRESENT	Duerme. Sonríe.	<i>Sleep. Smile.</i>

Irregular *tú* Commands

The following are the only irregular commands in the affirmative **tú** form. It is a good idea to learn these imperatives right away.

Infinitive	tú Command	English
decir	di	<i>say</i>
hacer	haz	<i>do</i>
ir	ve	<i>go</i>
poner	pon	<i>put</i>
salir	sal	<i>leave</i>
ser	sé	<i>be</i>
tener	ten	<i>have</i>
venir	ven	<i>come</i>

Haz tus ejercicios, por favor.	<i>Do your exercises, please.</i>
Ven acá.	<i>Come here.</i>
Pon tus zapatos en el armario.	<i>Put your shoes in the closet.</i>
Ten cuidado.	<i>Be careful.</i>

NOTE The command form can be softened by adding **por favor** (*please*).



Exercise 21.1

Translate the following regular **tú** commands into English.

1. Toma tu medicina y llama al doctor en la mañana.

2. Sigue a la derecha, por favor.

3. Cierra la puerta, por favor, y abre la ventana.

4. Corre a la tienda y compra la leche.

5. Prepara la comida esta noche y después, saca la basura, por favor.

6. Lee *Don Quixote* para la clase y escribe tu opinión acerca del tema principal.

7. Come más frutas y verduras.

8. Cuenta conmigo.



Exercise 21.2

Write the affirmative **tú** command form for the following verbs.

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| 1. apagar | to turn off | _____ |
| 2. compartir | to share | _____ |
| 3. decidir | to decide | _____ |
| 4. devolver | to return (an object) | _____ |
| 5. doblar | to turn | _____ |
| 6. mirar | to look at, to watch | _____ |
| 7. oír | to hear | _____ |

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-------|
| 8. regresar | to return | _____ |
| 9. terminar | to end | _____ |
| 10. tirar | to throw | _____ |



Exercise 21.3

Complete the following sentences with the **tú** command form of the verb in parentheses. Both regular and irregular commands are included.

EXAMPLE ¿Por qué no vienes acá? Ven acá.

- Tú nunca dices la verdad. _____ la verdad. (decir)
- Tú debes portarte bien. _____ un buen niño. (ser)
- _____ tu pregunta, por favor. (leer)
- _____ el correo electrónico. (escribir)
- Hay mucho peligro en la selva. _____ cuidado. (tener)
- _____ la ropa en el cajón, por favor. (poner)
- _____ acá. (venir)
- Tú te vas a engordar si no haces ejercicios. _____ ejercicios por lo menos tres veces a la semana. (hacer)
- Necesitamos arroz para preparar la comida. _____ el arroz, por favor. (traer)
- _____ a tu hermanita. (esperar)

Placement of Object Pronouns with Affirmative *tú* Commands

All object pronouns are attached to the affirmative form of the imperative. When two object pronouns occur together, the indirect object pronoun precedes the direct object pronoun.

Escribe la carta.

Write the letter.

Escríbeme la carta.

Write the letter to me.

Escríbemela.

Write it to me.

Enseña la lección.

Teach the lesson.

Enséñanos la lección.

Teach us the lesson.

Enséñanosla.

Teach it to us.

Presta el dinero.	<i>Lend the money.</i>
Préstale el dinero a María.	<i>Lend the money to María.</i>
Préstaselo.	<i>Lend it to her.</i>
Tráeles las galletas a tus colegas.	<i>Bring the cookies to your colleagues.</i>
Tráeselas.	<i>Bring them to them.</i>
Dame la sartén.	<i>Give me the frying pan.</i>
Dámela.	<i>Give it to me.</i>
Dinos la idea.	<i>Tell us the idea.</i>
Dínosla.	<i>Tell it to us.</i>
Perdóname.	<i>Pardon me. / Excuse me.</i>

NOTE The written accent maintains the stress on the correct syllable in the imperative: **escribe**, **escribeme**, **escribemela**, for example.

In Spanish, the reflexive command form is very important. The reflexive object pronoun is attached the affirmative command form, and the written accent is again used to maintain stress on the correct syllable. Practice these examples aloud.

Infinitive	tú Command	English
acordarse	Acuérdate.	<i>Remember.</i>
acostarse	Acuéstate.	<i>Go to bed.</i>
despertarse	Despiértate.	<i>Wake up.</i>
dormirse	Duérmete.	<i>Go to sleep.</i>
levantarse	Levántate.	<i>Get up.</i>
sentarse	Siéntate.	<i>Sit down.</i>

When a reflexive object pronoun and a direct object pronoun occur together, the reflexive object pronoun precedes the direct object pronoun.

Lávate las manos.	<i>Wash your hands.</i>
Lávatelas.	<i>Wash them.</i>
Quítate los zapatos.	<i>Take off your shoes.</i>
Quítatelos.	<i>Take them off.</i>
Ponte el abrigo.	<i>Put on your coat.</i>
Póntelo.	<i>Put it on.</i>



Exercise 21.4

Write the affirmative **tú** command form for the following verbs. All responses require a written accent to maintain stress on the correct syllable, except **irse**. Pronounce each response aloud.

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|-------|
| 1. fijarse | to notice | _____ |
| 2. animarse | to cheer up | _____ |
| 3. callarse | to be quiet | _____ |
| 4. arreglarse | to get ready | _____ |
| 5. moverse | to move | _____ |
| 6. irse | to go away | _____ |
| 7. quedarse | to stay | _____ |
| 8. pararse | to stand up | _____ |
| 9. cepillarse | to brush one's teeth | _____ |
| 10. vestirse | to get dressed | _____ |
| 11. divertirse | to have a good time | _____ |
| 12. dormirse | to fall asleep | _____ |

Negative **tú** Commands

The negative **tú** command form is the same as the present subjunctive form.

To form the negative **tú** command, begin with the **yo** form of the present indicative tense. Drop the final **-o** to get the stem of the present subjunctive.

- For **-ar** verbs, add **-es** to the stem.
- For **-er** and **-ir** verbs, add **-as** to the stem.

-Ar Verbs

No grites.

No fumes en mi casa, por favor.

No juegues con fósforos.

No toques el enchufe.

Don't yell.

Don't smoke in my house, please.

Don't play with matches.

Don't touch the light socket.

-Er and -ir Verbs

No mientas.	<i>Don't lie.</i>
No corras con tijeras.	<i>Don't run with scissors.</i>
No comas comida rápida.	<i>Don't eat fast food.</i>
No subas la montaña solo.	<i>Don't climb the mountain alone.</i>
No bebas esa agua.	<i>Don't drink that water.</i>

Pronounce the commands listed above aloud. Take time to write down both the affirmative and negative commands you need in everyday life, pronounce them, and try to learn them by memory. The negative commands are very important.

Placement of Object Pronouns with Negative *tú* Commands

All object pronouns precede the verb in a negative command. The indirect object pronoun precedes the direct object pronoun if they appear together.

No abras la ventana.	<i>Don't open the window.</i>
No la abras.	<i>Don't open it.</i>
No cierres la puerta.	<i>Don't close the door.</i>
No la cierres.	<i>Don't close it.</i>
No lo hagas.	<i>Don't do it.</i>
No me lo digas.	<i>Don't say it to me.</i>
No me traigas las tortas.	<i>Don't bring me the cakes.</i>
No me las traigas.	<i>Don't bring them to me.</i>
No nos cuentes el mismo cuento.	<i>Don't tell us the same story.</i>
No nos lo cuentes.	<i>Don't tell it to us.</i>
No le escribas una carta a Federico.	<i>Don't write a letter to Fred.</i>
No se la escribas.	<i>Don't write it to him.</i>
No les prestes dinero.	<i>Don't lend them money.</i>
No se lo prestes.	<i>Don't lend it to them.</i>
No le des nada a Dorotea.	<i>Don't give anything to Dorothy.</i>

The reflexive object pronoun also precedes the verb in a negative **tú** command.

No te enfades.	<i>Don't get angry.</i>
No te vayas.	<i>Don't go.</i>
No te quejes.	<i>Don't complain.</i>
No te asustes.	<i>Don't be afraid.</i>

If a reflexive verb and a direct object appear in the same phrase, the reflexive object pronoun precedes the direct object pronoun.

No te pongas el abrigo en el verano.	<i>Don't put on your coat in the summer.</i>
No te lo pongas.	<i>Don't put it on.</i>
No te quites el sombrero en el invierno.	<i>Don't take off your hat in the winter.</i>
No te lo quites.	<i>Don't take it off.</i>

Review of **tú** Commands

Regular **tú** Commands

	Affirmative	Negative
cantar	canta	no cantes
beber	bebe	no bebas
abrir	abre	no abras

Irregular **tú** Commands

	Affirmative	Negative
decir	di	no digas
hacer	haz	no hagas
ir	ve	no vayas
poner	pon	no pongas
salir	sal	no salgas
ser	sé	no seas
tener	ten	no tengas
venir	ven	no vengas



Exercise 21.5

Translate the following commands into English.

- 1. Hazme un favor. _____
- 2. Dinos la verdad. _____
- 3. Vete. _____
- 4. Ponte las medias. _____
- 5. Sal ahora. _____
- 6. Sé un buen perro. _____
- 7. Ten cuidado. _____
- 8. Ven acá. _____



Exercise 21.6

Write the correct affirmative and negative **tú** commands for the following verbs, according to the example given. Pronounce each command aloud.

		AFFIRMATIVE	NEGATIVE
EXAMPLE	cruzar	<u>cruza (tú)</u>	<u>no cruces</u>
1.	correr	_____	_____
2.	caminar	_____	_____
3.	beber	_____	_____
4.	seguir	_____	_____
5.	repetir	_____	_____
6.	hablar	_____	_____
7.	mirar	_____	_____
8.	romper	_____	_____
9.	vender	_____	_____
10.	abrir	_____	_____
11.	subir	_____	_____
12.	empezar	_____	_____

- | | | |
|------------|-------|-------|
| 13. mentir | _____ | _____ |
| 14. salir | _____ | _____ |
| 15. poner | _____ | _____ |
| 16. tocar | _____ | _____ |



Exercise 21.7

Translate the following sentences into Spanish. Use the **tú** form for commands.

1. *Don't eat the salad in Guatemala. Don't eat it.*

2. *Don't run; another train is coming.*

3. *Don't tell me the secret. Don't tell it to me.*

4. *Don't do it.*

5. *Don't touch it.*

6. *Don't be afraid.*

7. *Don't lend money to her. Don't lend it to her.*

8. *Don't come late to the parade.*

9. *Don't give us bad news.*

10. *Don't bring candies to the child. Don't bring them to him.*

11. *Don't go away.*

12. *Don't worry.*

13. *Don't wait for me.*

14. *Don't be jealous.*
