



07. Giving commands, making requests and suggestions

Otherwise known as the imperative mood, we give commands, make requests and suggestions very often throughout the day so this is a good part of speech to master!

Regular verbs in the imperative mood

When we form a command or request, we are using the *imperative mood*. In French, we conjugate the imperative mood in a similar way to the present tense (so check back on that *Grammar Boost*) but we drop the subject pronouns (i.e. *tu, vous, nous*).

If you think about it, we can either ask one person to do something, more than one person to do something or suggest that we all do something. There are therefore three forms of imperative. (Bearing in mind that the second person plural and polite forms both use the same part of the verb; '*vous*').

To conjugate the imperative:

1. In the singular form (*tu*), we take the first person ('the *je* part') of the verb
2. In the second person plural or singular polite form (*vous*), we take 'the *vous* part' of the verb
3. In the first person plural (*nous*), we use the '*nous*' part of the verb. We use this to make a suggestion as to something '*we*' could do – **let's**

	<i>ER verbs</i>	<i>IR verbs</i>	<i>RE verbs</i>
1. Singular	Répète!	Finis!	Prends!
2. 2nd person plural/ polite singular	Répétez!	Finissez!	Prenez!
3. 1st person plural (i.e. let's!)	Répétons!	Finissons!	Prenons!

Examples:

1. *Finis ton dîner s'il te plaît!* Finish your dinner please! (to one child)
2. *Prenez un stylo chacun!* Take a pen each! (to more than one child)
3. *Répétons ensemble!* Let's repeat together!



Listen to the above examples

Common verbs which are irregular in the imperative mood

As is the case for many French verbs there are exceptions, here are the imperative forms for the high frequency irregular verbs we have seen in previous *Grammar Boosts*:

	Singular ('tu')	Plural/ polite ('vous')	Plural (nous) – 'let's'
<i>savoir</i>	<i>sache</i>	<i>sachez</i>	<i>sachons</i>
<i>faire</i>	<i>fais</i>	<i>faites</i>	<i>faisons</i>
<i>mettre</i>	<i>mets</i>	<i>mettez</i>	<i>mettons</i>
<i>dire</i>	<i>dis</i>	<i>dites</i>	<i>disons</i>
<i>venir</i>	<i>viens</i>	<i>venez</i>	<i>venons</i>
<i>aller</i>	<i>va</i>	<i>allez</i>	<i>allons</i>
<i>avoir</i>	<i>aie</i>	<i>ayez</i>	<i>ayons</i>
<i>être</i>	<i>sois</i>	<i>soyez</i>	<i>soyons</i>

Examples:

1. *Sois gentil!* Be kind!
2. *Mettez vos chaussures!* Put your shoes on!
3. *Allons au parc!* Let's go to the park!



Listen to the above examples

Forming negative commands

How do we turn affirmative statements into negative ones? Negation in French is generally in two parts; *ne* and another word. To add 'not' to your command, we need to place *ne... pas* around the verb. Examples:

1. *Ne viens pas!* Do not come!
2. *Ne tombez pas!* Do not fall!



Listen to the above examples

Other forms of negation (with present tense examples):

- *ne... rien* = nothing // *ne mange rien* He is eating nothing
- *ne... jamais* = never // *Je ne sors jamais* I never go out
- *ne... plus* = no longer // *Je ne chante plus* I no longer sing
- *ne... personne* = no-one // *Il n'y a personne* There is no-one there



Listen to the above forms of negation

Reflexive verbs with and without negation

How do we formulate commands using reflexive verbs? Well, in the imperative mood, the reflexive pronoun comes after the verb with the use of a hyphen. Examples:

1. *Lave-toi!* Wash yourself!
2. *Souvenez-vous!* Remember!
3. *Dépêchons-nous!* Let's hurry!

Useful!

- In the negative form – be careful as the reflexive pronoun goes back to being in front of the verb! Examples:
 1. *Ne t'arrête pas!* Don't stop!
 2. *Ne vous inquiétez pas!* Do not worry!
 3. *Ne nous fâchons pas* Let's not get angry

That is the imperative mood in a nutshell! Remember as with all these *Grammar Boosts* practice will make perfect. So, choose some examples from above or make sentences which are useful to your daily routine and practice them at home for them to stick with you.