



Lesson 10. Mastering the verbs 5

Imperatives

Many insignificant details make a masterpiece.

The imperative is the easiest tense to learn in English. Therefore, if you already feel comfortable with the imperative, concentrate on pronunciation and learning the structures by heart in order to boost your level of English.

Structure

The imperative has two forms.

1. An order in which you don't include yourself

In this case, we only need to use the bare infinitive without "to" like this:

- Come- *Ven*
- Go- *Vete*
- Study- *Estudia*
- Work- *Trabaja*

In the negative form we have to add "do not" or "don't", like this:

- Don't come- *No vengas*
- Don't go – *No te vayas*
- Don't study- *No estudies*
- Don't work- *No trabajes*

How do we distinguish between "you" singular and "you" plural in this case?

To make the imperative plural, although not strictly necessary, some native speakers add "you people" or "you guys"(Amer. English) making no distinction between feminine or masculine.

Example:

- Hey, you people, come! Formal- *Vengan*
- Hey, you guys, come! Informal- *Venid*

2. An order in which you include yourself

In this case, we have to use "Let us" in its contracted form, "Let's".



- Let's go- *Vamos*
- Let's do it- *Hagámoslo*
- Let's study- *Estudiemos*
- Let's work- *Trabajemos*

In the negative form we add "not", like this:

- Let's not go- *No vayamos*
- Let's not do it- *No lo hagamos*
- Let's not study- *No estudiemos*
- Let's not work – *No trabajemos*

Example of the "imperative" in audiobook chapter 7: **Take me far away, Dorian!**

When do we use imperatives?

We usually use imperatives when we want to express:

- Command- Do it!
- Request – Please, do not open the window.
- Invitation- Come to visit us
- Giving permission – Have a coffee if you feel like it.
- Wish – Have a nice trip!
- Apologise- Excuse me.

Please, go to chapter 7 of your audiobook and listen to it at least two times then read it.

As you'll see, I have highlighted the imperative tense **in red**.

Chapter 7

A cruel expression in the portrait

"He had wished that he could remain young and that the portrait would grow old."

For some reason, the theatre was crowded that night and the fat manager met them at the door with a smile.

After the orchestra played, Sibyl Vane came onto the stage. 'Yes, really beautiful,' thought Lord Henry; one of the most beautiful creatures he had ever seen in his life. Basil Hallward stood up and started to applaud. Dorian Gray remained seated, looking at her. Lord Henry murmured "Charming! Charming!"

However, Sibyl's performance was different from other nights. She showed no sign of joy when her eyes met Romeo's. The few words she had to say had no life and her voice sounded false.

Dorian Gray started to become nervous. Neither of his two friends risked saying anything. She seemed to them a bad actress.

Sibyl's performance got worse and worse and the audience started to shout and whistle.

Lord Henry got up from his seat and put on his coat.

"She is very beautiful, Dorian" he said, "but a very bad actress. **Let's go.**"

"I'm going to stay until the play finishes", replied the young man. "I am very sad because I have wasted your time, Harry."

"My dear Dorian, it seems to me that Miss Vane is ill" interrupted Hallward. "We will come another night."

"Dorian, you mustn't stay here anymore" said Lord Henry. **Come to the club with Basil and me.** We will smoke cigarettes and drink to celebrate Sibyl Vane's beauty. What more could you want?"

"Go" exclaimed the young man. "I want to be alone. **You go too, Basil.**"

"Let's go, Basil" said Lord Henry, with a strange tenderness in his voice and the two youngsters will leave together.

When the play finished, Dorian went to see Sibyl. The girl was alone. Her eyes shone when she saw him.

"How badly I have performed tonight, Dorian!" She exclaimed.

"Horribly!" He replied. Are you ill?"

The young woman smiled.

"Don't you understand?" She said.

"Understand what? He asked

"Why I have performed so badly tonight."

Dorian shrugged his shoulders.

"My friends were bored. I was bored."

She seemed not to listen. She was happy.

"Dorian, Dorian" she exclaimed. "Before I met you I only lived for the theatre. Tonight, for the first time, I realised that Romeo was hideous, old and made-up; the moonlight in the orchard was false and the words that I spoke weren't my words. You have made me understand what love really is. My love! My love! My Prince Charming! I smiled when I heard the audience's whistles. What do they know of a love like ours? **Take me far away, Dorian!**"

Dorian fell onto the sofa.

"You have killed my love" he said.

Astonished, she looked at him. He didn't reply. She went over to him and stroked his hair with her small fingers. She knelt and put her hands on his lips. He pushed them away.

"Yes" he exclaimed. "You have killed my love. I loved you because you were marvellous, because you had genius and intellect. Now I see you are stupid. I will never see you again. I will never think about you."

The girl turned pale and shook. She stood up and crossed the room towards him. She put her hand on his arm, looking into his eyes. He pushed her.

"Don't touch me!" He shouted.

She flung herself at his feet like a trampled flower.

"Dorian! Dorian! **Don't leave me!**" She whispered **Kiss me again, my love. Don't go away from me. Don't leave me.** My brother...it doesn't matter. He didn't know what he was saying. It was a joke...**forgive me Don't leave me!**"

She sobbed. She shrank to the floor like a wounded creature. Dorian Gray looked down on her with his beautiful eyes.

"I'm going" he said, finally. "I don't wish to be cruel, but I can't see you again."

Shortly after, Dorian Gray arrived home. He entered, crossed the library towards the bedroom and as he opened the door he saw the portrait that Basil Hallward had painted of him. He was surprised. He approached the picture and examined it. It seemed that the face had changed a little. The expression was different. It appeared to have a touch of cruelty in the mouth. It was really strange.

He opened the blind and the light illuminated the room. The strange expression on the face was still there. What had happened?

Suddenly he remembered what he had said in Basil Hallward's studio the day he finished the portrait. He had wished that he could remain young and that the portrait become old. Had his wish come true? Impossible! However, the picture was there, in

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front of him, with a touch of cruelty in the mouth.

Had he been cruel? It was the girl's fault, not his. He had fallen in love with her because he thought she was a great artist and she had disappointed him. He felt regret as he remembered her lying on the floor and crying. He would get back with Sibyl Vane, he would marry her, he would try to cheer her up again. Poor child! He got up and hung a big screen in front of the portrait.

"How horrible!" He murmured.

Listen and repeat the following sentences aloud.

Spanish	English	Phonetics	Approximate Pronunciation
Vámonos	Let's go	lets gəʊ	Lets góu
Venga al club con Basil y conmigo y	Come to the club with Basil and me	kʌm tə ðə klʌb wɪð 'bæzl , ənd miː	Kam tu de klab wuiz beissel and mi
Váyase usted también, Basil	You go too, Basil	ju gəʊ tuː 'bæzl	Iu gou tu beissel
Llévame lejos, Dorian	Take me far away, Dorian	teɪk miː fɑːr ə'weɪ 'dɔːɪən	Teik mi far ówuei dorian
¡No que toques!	Don't touch me!	dəʊnt tʌtʃ miː	Dóunt tach mi
¡No me dejes!	Don't leave me!	dəʊnt liːv miː	Dóun liv mi
Bésame otra vez, mi amor	Kiss me again, my love	kɪs miː ə'gen maɪ lʌv	Kismi águen mai lov
No te alejes de mí	Don't go away from me	dəʊnt gəʊ ə'weɪ frəm miː	Dóun góu ówei fróm mi
Perdóname	Forgive me	fə'gɪv miː	For'gɪv mi

To sum up:

The imperative has two forms:

1) If you don't include yourself in the order, we use the bare infinitive. Example: Go!- *Vete* Negative form, add "Don't" Example: Don't go- *No te vayas*.

2) If you include yourself in the order, we add "Let's" Example: Let's go- *Vámonos*. Negative form adds "not"- Example: Let's not go. *No vayamos*.

As the imperative is a very easy tense to learn, use this lesson as an opportunity to memorise structures and improve your pronunciation.

Homework

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www.elblogdelingles.com 5



Translate the following sentences into English. Please, check the answers below.

Once you have corrected your mistakes, repeat the sentences aloud in English.

1. No grites
2. Recuerda que es tarde
3. No te olvides de recoger a tu hermana del cole
4. Consideremos otras posibilidades
5. Pensemos qué es mejor
6. No inventemos historias
7. Duerme bien
8. ¡Despiértate!
9. No lo pienses
10. Despídete

Answers

1. Don't shout
2. Remember it's late
3. Don't forget to pick up your sister from school
4. Let's consider other possibilities
5. Let's think what is better
6. Let's not make up stories
7. Sleep well
8. Wake up!
9. Don't think about it
10. Say good-bye