

English grammar

Imperative sentences

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?