Spanish Commands: Tú, Usted and Nosotros (Charts + Quiz)

Updated October 30, 2026



Quick answer: Spanish commands (the **imperative**, *el imperativo*) change depending on who you're talking to and whether the command is positive or negative. For a friend (tú), most positive commands look like the él/ella present form: *¡Habla!* (Speak!), *¡Come!* (Eat!). Negative tú commands use the subjunctive: *¡No hables!* (Don't speak!). Formal commands (usted) also use the subjunctive: *¡Hable!*, *¡Pida!*

This guide covers every type of Spanish command (tú, usted, ustedes, nosotros and vosotros), the 8 irregular tú commands, where pronouns go, and the accent rule. A quiz is at the end.

Spanish commands at a glance

Who	Affirmative	Negative
tú (informal)	habla, come, escribe	no hables, no comas, no escribas
usted (formal)	hable, coma, escriba	no hable, no coma, no escriba
ustedes (plural)	hablen, coman, escriban	no hablen, no coman, no escriban
nosotros (let's)	hablemos, comamos, escribamos	no hablemos, no comamos, no escribamos
vosotros (Spain)	hablad, comed, escribid	no habléis, no comáis, no escribáis

Affirmative tú commands

For regular verbs, take the **tú present form and drop the -s** (which gives the same form as él/ella):

- hablar → (tú hablas) → **¡Habla más despacio!** – Speak more slowly!
- comer → (tú comes) → **¡Come tus verduras!** – Eat your vegetables!
- escribir → (tú escribes) → **¡Escríbeme!** – Write to me!

Stem changes stay: *pensar* → *piensa*, *volver* → *vuelve*, *pedir* → *pide*.

The 8 irregular tú commands

Infinitive	Command	Example
decir	**di**	*Dime la verdad.* – Tell me the truth.
hacer	**haz**	*Haz la tarea.* – Do your homework.
ir	**ve**	*Ve a tu cuarto.* – Go to your room.
poner	**pon**	*Pon la mesa.* – Set the table.
salir	**sal**	*Sal de aquí.* – Get out of here.
ser	**sé**	*Sé amable.* – Be kind.
tener	**ten**	*Ten cuidado.* – Be careful.
venir	**ven**	*Ven acá.* – Come here.

Memory trick: "**Vin Diesel has ten weapons**": *ven, di, sal, haz, ten, ve, pon, sé*.

Negative tú commands

Use **no + the present subjunctive**. Take the yo form, drop the -o and add the "opposite" ending: **-es** for -ar verbs and **-as** for -er/-ir verbs.

- hablar → hablo → **No hables.** – Don't talk.
- comer → como → **No comas eso.** – Don't eat that.
- salir → salgo → **No salgas tarde.** – Don't go out late.
- tener → tengo → **No tengas miedo.** – Don't be afraid.

Irregular: *ir → no vayas*, *ser → no seas*, *dar → no des*, *estar → no estés*, *saber → no sepas*.

Formal commands: usted and ustedes

Formal commands use the present subjunctive too, for both positive and negative commands:

Infinitive	usted	ustedes
hablar	hable	hablen
comer	coma	coman
pedir	pida	pidan
salir	salga	salgan
ir	vaya	vayan
ser	sea	sean
dar	dé	den
estar	esté	estén
saber	sepa	sepan

You'll hear formal commands all the time at work, in stores and in healthcare: *Pase, por favor* (Come in, please), *Respire profundo* (Breathe deeply), *Firme aquí* (Sign here). See Spanish medical terms and Spanish for law enforcement for job-specific commands.

Nosotros commands: "Let's…"

- **Hablemos.** – Let's talk.
- **Comamos aquí.** – Let's eat here.

- **Vamos.** – Let's go. (Irregular: *vamos*, not *vayamos*; negative is *no vayamos*.)

Where do pronouns go?

- **Affirmative:** attach them to the end of the verb: *Dímelo* (Tell it to me), *Siéntate* (Sit down), *Póntelo* (Put it on).
- **Negative:** put them before the verb: *No me lo digas* (Don't tell me), *No te sientes* (Don't sit down).

Accent rule: when you attach pronouns, add a written accent to keep the original stress: *compra → cómpralo*, *explica → explícame*. One-syllable commands with one pronoun don't need it: *dime, ponte, hazlo*.

More on reflexive commands like *ponte* and *vístete*: **ponerse vs vestirse**.

Common mistakes

- **× No habla → ✓ No hables.** Negative tú commands need the subjunctive.
- **× Decí / dice → ✓ Di.** (*Decí* is the Argentine vos form, which is fine in Argentina.)
- **× Dime lo → ✓ Dímelo.** Attach pronouns as one word.
- **× Vayamos (let's go) → ✓ Vamos.**

Quick quiz

1. (tú, venir) ¡_____ aquí ahora!
2. (tú, no tocar) ¡_____ eso!
3. (usted, pedir) _____ el número de teléfono, por favor.
4. (tú, salir) ¡_____ de la cocina!
5. (tú, decir + me + lo) ¡_____!

▶ Show answers

Frequently asked questions

What is the imperative in Spanish?

It's the verb form used to give commands, instructions or requests: ¡Ven! , Hable más despacio , No toques eso .

What is the affirmative tú command of salir?

Sal : ¡Sal de ahí! – Get out of there! The negative is no salgas .

What is the formal command of pedir?

Pida (usted) and pidan (ustedes): Pida lo que quiera – Order whatever you like.

How do you make a command polite in Spanish?

Add por favor , use usted, or turn it into a question: ¿Me puede ayudar? – Can you help me?

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