SPANISH VERBS – PEDIR CONJUGATION LESSONS

What's easier, to ask for permission or to ask for forgiveness?: Conjugation of the verb Pedir

A few years ago, in a beauty pageant, this was one of the questions asked to a Miss: "What is easier, to ask for permission or to ask for forgiveness?" (in spanish: "Es mejor pedir perdón, que pedir permiso), I guess this kind of question takes a couple of minutes of internal debate to know what you would choose, but how long would it take you to formulate this same sentence in Spanish? How easy is it for you to conjugate the verb **Pedir**?

Perhaps the easiest thing to do would be to think of situations where you would have to consider ordering or asking. Whether you are in a restaurant or if you are a romantic who wants to ask for the hand of that girl; if your purpose is to ask for any of these things (without fear of being wrong in Spanish) come and let's learn how to conjugate this verb.

From -i to -e: Pedir, irregular verb

Pedir is an irregular verb, which means that we are going to see it change in several ways depending on the person who is saying it, and the moment in which they say it (the tenses). Many times, what can be scary about irregular verbs is having to memorize the variations in order to say it correctly, but we all make mistakes when we are learning something new, so the best thing to do is to practice as much as possible in real conversations to distinguish those conjugations that are more difficult, and to know where to make an effort.

You will notice that in Spanish we use this verb in several contexts, while in English we can see how it varies, here are a couple of common phrases and their equivalents to help you with the examples below:

- Pedir ayuda – To ask for help
- Pedir un taxi – To call a cab
- Pedir perdón – To apologize

- Pedir comida – To order food

Variety in its finest, isn't it? But, looking at the glass half full, from four verbs in English, we went to just one in Spanish, easy peasy!

Pedir: one verb, three verbals

Before we start with the conjugations, let's first go with a hack. There are three ways in which the verb "pedir" is presented that are not considered conjugations, those ways are called Verbals. The key point to knowing what a Verbal looks like (and also knowing how to use them) is to remember that they are accompanied by another verb that is conjugated. Verbals come in three forms: infinitive, gerund y participle.

	Verbal	Common use	Example	English
Infinitive	pedir (to ask, asking)	Non conjugated / Noun	El acto de pedir puede ser muy difícil.	The act of asking can be very difficult.
Gerund	pidiendo (asking for)	Adverb/verbal periphrasis	Mejor voy pidiendo mi taxi, para llegar a tiempo.	I'd better order my cab, so I can get there on time.
Participle	pedido (asked for)	Adjective	Debí haber pedido más refresco.	I should have ordered more soda.

Pedir Conjugation: Indicative Mood

When you encounter the indicative mood, you are dealing with the simplest version of the conjugations, in this mood the verbs (actions) are presented in a straightforward manner.

Simple Tenses of the Indicative Mood

Subject	Present	Preterite	Imperfect	Conditional	Future
	(ask)	(asked)	(asked)	(would ask)	(will ask)

Subject	Present	Preterite	Imperfect	Conditional	Future
yo	pido	pedí	pedía	pediría	pediré
tú	pides	pediste	pedías	pedirías	pedirás
él/ella / usted	pide	pidió	pedía	pediría	pedirá
nosotros	pedimos	pedimos	pedíamos	pediríamos	pediremos
ellos/ ella/ ustedes	piden	pidieron	pedían	pedirían	pedirán

Examples:

Si hubiese café, lo **pediríamos**. – If there was coffee, we **would order** it.

Él **pidió** demasiado, tuve que terminar lo nuestro. – He **asked** for too much, I had to end it.

Compound Tenses of the Indicative Mood

Subject	Present Perfect	Past Perfect (Pluperfect)	Conditional Perfect	Future Perfect
	(have/has asked)	(had asked)	(would have asked)	(will have asked)
yo	he pedido	había pedido	habría pedido	habré pedido
tú	has pedido	habías pedido	habrías pedido	habrás pedido
él/ella/usted	ha pedido	había pedido	habría pedido	habrá pedido
nosotros	hemos pedido	habíamos pedido	habríamos pedido	habremos pedido
ellos/ellas ustedes	han pedido	habían pedido	habrían pedido	habrán pedidohabrán pedido

Pedir Conjugation: Subjunctive Mood

With the subjunctive mood we go one level further, instead of formulating simple sentences with direct actions, the subjunctive is directed towards expressing desires and hypotheses; in this mood the verb remains irregular (from -e to -i) in the simple tense, and remains regular in the compound tense.

Simple Tenses of the Subjunctive Mood

Subject	Present	Imperfect	Imperfect 2	Future
yo	pida	pidiera	pidiese	pidiere
tú	pidas	pidieras	pidieses	pidieres
él/ella/usted	pida	pidiera	pidiese	pidiere
nosotros	pidamos	pidiéramos	pidiésemos	pidiéremos
ellos/ellas/ustedes	pidan	pidieran	pidiesen	pidieren

Examples:

Me enamoró que **pidiese** té en vez de café – I loved that he **ordered** tea instead of coffee.

Que pida tu mano ahora no significa que no lo deseara antes – Just because I **ask** for your hand now doesn't mean that I didn't want it before.

Compound Tenses of the Subjunctive Mood

Subject	Present Perfect	Past Perfect (Pluperfect)	Past Perfect 2 (Pluperfect 2)	Future Perfect
yo	haya pedido	hubiera pedido	hubiese pedido	hubiere pedido
tú	hayas pedido	hubieras pedido	hubieses pedido	hubieres pedido
él/ella/usted	haya pedido	hubiera pedido	hubiese pedido	hubiere pedido
nosotros	hayamos pedido	hubiéramos pedido	hubiésemos pedido	hubiéremos pedido
ellos/ellas/ustedes	hayan pedido	hubieran pedido	hubiesen pedido	hubieren pedido

Pedir Conjugation: Imperative Mood

In this mood we put ourselves in the shoes of the policemen, since it is the mood of orders and commands. Here the number of changes to memorize is reduced because the number of people (and times) is reduced too.

Imperative Mood's Conjugations

Subject	Affirmative	Negative
	(ask / let's ask)	(don't ask / let's not ask)
tú	pide	no pidas
nosotros	pidamos	no pidamos
usted	pida	no pida
ustedes	pidan	no pidan

Examples:

Pide lo que quieras, yo te lo doy. – **Ask** for what you want, I will give it to you.

No pidan camarones, les pueden caer mal. – **Don't ask** for shrimp, they may be bad for you.

A bit of practice!

Let's finish with a couple of exercises, there is only one rule, this is like an open book exam, you can go up and consult the lesson to guide you with the answers, just don't cheat by going to the end to see the answers without having answered first.

1. No ___ esa pizza, me dieron malas recomendaciones de este restaurante. – Let's not order that pizza, I got bad recommendations from this restaurant.

2. Ella ___ disculpas a su hermana por comerse su pastel – She apologized to her sister for eating her cake.

3. Si hubiésemos ___ un taxi en vez de irnos caminando, habríamos llegado a tiempo – If we had called for a cab instead of walking, we would have arrived on time.

4. Fred, Dustin y Will siempre ___ comida por delivery. – Fred, Dustin and Will always order food for delivery.

5. Sandra ___ un viaje a Australia por su cumpleaños. – Sandra will ask for a trip to Australia for her birthday.

The answers

Let's see, how did you do? It's time to compare answers!

1. pidamos

2. pidió

3. pedido

4. piden

5. pedirá