



Meaning of **imperative** in English



imperative

adjective

UK /ɪmˈper.ə.tɪv/ US /ɪmˈper.ə.tɪv/

imperative adjective (URGENT)

Add to word list

C2

extremely important or urgent:

- [+ that] *The president said it was imperative **that** the release of all hostages be secured.*
- [+ to infinitive] *It's imperative **to** act now before the problem gets really serious.*

— SMART Vocabulary: related words and phrases



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imperative adjective (GRAMMAR)



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used for giving an instruction or order:

- **imperative clause** *The rule that there must be a subject applies only to declarative and interrogative clauses, and not to imperative clauses.*
- **imperative form** *In the phrase "Leave him alone!", the verb "leave" is in the imperative form.*



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imperatives (orders/instructions) and exclamatives (used for exclamations). ...

Declarative clauses

Declarative clauses most commonly function as statements. The usual word order is subject (s) + verb (v) + x. Declaratives can be affirmative or negative. They make statements about how things are and how they are not. ...

Interrogative clauses

Interrogative clauses most commonly function as questions. The usual word order is (wh-word) + auxiliary/modal verb (aux/m) + subject + verb + x: ...

Imperative clauses

Imperative clauses most commonly function as commands, instructions or orders. The usual word order is verb + x. We do not usually include the subject in an imperative clause. We use the base form of the verb: ...

Exclamative clauses

Exclamative clauses usually have one of the following word orders: ...

Commands and instructions

We often use an imperative in commands, and we also use must. They both sound very direct: ...

Giving commands

We often use an imperative in commands, and we also use must. They both sound very direct: ...

Giving instructions

We use instructions to tell someone how to do something. We usually use imperatives. They do not sound too direct in this context: ...





do not, is rather formal. In speaking, we usually use don't: ...

Negative imperatives with subject pronoun

We can use emphatic pronoun you or anyone/anybody after don't in negative imperatives, especially in informal speaking: ...

Negative imperative of let's

We often use the phrase let's not: ...

Question tags commonly used after imperatives

We sometimes use question tags with imperatives. They make the imperative less direct: ...

Imperatives as offers and invitations

We can use imperatives to make offers and invitations: ...



imperative

noun [C]

UK /ɪmˈper.ə.tɪv/ US /ɪmˈper.ə.tɪv/

imperative noun [C] (GRAMMAR)



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+ More examples

+ SMART Vocabulary: related words and phrases

imperative *noun* [C] (URGENT)



[C]

something that is extremely important or urgent:

- **moral imperative** *Getting the unemployed back to work, said the mayor, is a moral imperative.*



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auxiliary/modal verb (aux/m) + subject + verb + x: ...

Imperative clauses

Imperative clauses most commonly function as commands, instructions or orders. The usual word order is verb + x. We do not usually include the subject in an imperative clause. We use the base form of the verb: ...

Exclamative clauses

Exclamative clauses usually have one of the following word orders: ...

Commands and instructions

We often use an imperative in commands, and we also use must. They both sound very direct: ...

Giving commands

We often use an imperative in commands, and we also use must. They both sound very direct: ...

Giving instructions

We use instructions to tell someone how to do something. We usually use imperatives. They do not sound too direct in this context: ...

Imperative clauses (Be quiet!)

We use imperative clauses when we want to tell someone to do something (most commonly for advice, suggestions, requests, commands, orders or instructions). ...

Imperatives with subject pronouns

For emphasis, we can use you in an imperative clause: ...

Imperatives with do





Question tags commonly used after imperatives

We sometimes use question tags with imperatives. They make the imperative less direct: ...

Imperatives as offers and invitations

We can use imperatives to make offers and invitations: ...

(Definition of **imperative** from the [Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus](#) © Cambridge University Press)

imperative | AMERICAN DICTIONARY

imperative

adjective

US  /ɪmˈper·ə·tɪv/

imperative adjective (URGENT)

Add to word list 

extremely important or urgent:

- [+ that clause] *It is imperative that these medical supplies be delivered immediately.*



imperative



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- *The government has a moral imperative to provide equal access to high-quality education for all children.*

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EXAMPLES of imperative

imperative

A balanced combination of declarative and *imperative* languages is desirable for implementing multi-agent systems.



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There is a time when sexuality is a victory, when it is released from moral imperatives.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



In this way, the demands of the examination system and the *imperative* to raise standards of attainment are met.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



Strictly speaking, the *imperative* singular is the same form as the bare stem.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



For such problems, a logical specification of the algorithm is sometimes simpler than an *imperative* specification.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



He is interested in the material and functional imperatives that allow the self-maintaining economic order to survive.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



Conversely, where governments' incentives are at odds with developmental imperatives, policymaking and implementation are vulnerable to economically damaging political opportunism.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



We're driven and enjoying it; it's a musical *imperative*.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



By shedding excess and approaching sung dialogue as if it were speech, singers were to be singing actors - the *imperative* of a musical dramatic art





imperative

These are words often used in combination with *imperative*.

Click on a collocation to see more examples of it.

categorical imperative

- For example, the categorical imperative does not admit of degrees of moral goodness or badness, as consequentialist theories do.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



commercial imperative

- Nicholson's starting point is the commonly accepted meaning of the word 'fusion' - the commercial imperative that led jazz to get into bed with rock at the end of the 1960s.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



economic imperative

- There is an overwhelming economic imperative of growth and wealth creation in this migration to cities.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



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imperativo, fundamental, imperativo/-va...

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WORD OF THE DAY

comfort zone

UK  /'kʌm.fət ,zəʊn/ US  /'kʌm.fət ,zoʊn/

a situation in which you feel comfortable and in which your ability and determination are not being tested

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