ESOL E2 - Imperatives

# of 20 – Welcome

Welcome to this session on imperatives.

In this session you will learn:

* What imperatives are
* How to identify imperatives
* How to use imperatives

You will need a pair of headphones.

# of 20 – What is an imperative?

In English, imperatives are used to tell someone what to do.

Compare these two sentences:

1. Could you close the window?

This is a **request**. We are ***asking*** someone to do something.

1. Close the window

This is an **instruction**. We are ***telling*** someone to do something.

# of 20 – Identifying the imperative

Let's look at the instruction again:

**Close** the window.

An imperative is a present simple verb. You can identify it in the sentence as it is the action that someone is being asked to do.

In the sentence above, the imperative is ‘close’.

# of 20 – Identifying the imperative - continued

Let’s look at another instruction:

**Put** the sugar in with the butter and **mix** them together.

In this sentence, we are asking someone to do 2 things. The imperatives are ‘put’ and ‘mix’.

# of 20 – Question 1

Take a look at the statement below. Which word is the imperative in the sentence?

‘Stir in the eggs.’

1. Stir
2. in
3. the
4. eggs

Answer: In the sentence ‘stir in the eggs’, the word **stir** is the imperative as it is telling someone what to do.

# of 20 – Question 2

Take a look at the statement below. Which word is the imperative in the sentence?

‘Roll out the dough.’

1. Roll
2. out
3. the
4. dough

In the sentence ‘roll out the dough’, the word **roll** is the imperative as it is telling someone what to do.

# of 20 – Question 3

Take a look at the statement below. Which word is the imperative in the sentence?

‘Slice the cake into eight pieces.’

1. Slice
2. the
3. cake
4. into
5. eight
6. pieces

In the sentence ‘slice the cake into eight pieces’, the word **slice** is the imperative as it is telling someone what to do.

# of 20 – Negative imperatives

Negative imperatives are used to tell someone not to do something. To make the instruction negative, we put ‘do not’ or ‘don’t’ before the verb.

Here is an example:

**Do not climb** out of the window.

In the sentence above, the negative imperative is ‘do not climb’.

# of 20 – Negative imperatives - contiuned

Here is another example of a negative imperative:

**Don’t switch** the lights off.

In the sentence above, the negative imperative is ‘don’t switch’.

# of 20 – Question 4

Take a look at the statement below. What is the negative imperative in the sentence?

‘Do not leave me on my own.’

1. Do not leave
2. me
3. on my own

In the sentence ‘do not leave me on my own’, the negative imperative is **‘do not leave’**. It is telling someone not to do something.

# of 20 – Web and online technologies

Take a look at the statement below. What is the negative imperative in the sentence?

‘Do not leave that there.’

1. Don’t leave
2. that
3. there

In the sentence ‘don’t leave that there’, the negative imperative is **‘don’t leave’**. It is telling someone not to do something.

# of 20 – Question 6

Take a look at the statement below. What is the negative imperative in the sentence?

‘Don’t forget to wash your hands.’

1. Don’t forget
2. to wash
3. your hands

In the sentence ‘don’t forget to wash your hands’, the negative imperative is **‘don’t forget’**. It is telling someone not to do something.

# of 20 – Changing a request into an instruction

We can change a request into an instruction by starting the sentence with an imperative and taking out any extra words.

Compare these two sentences again:

1. Could you close the window?

This is a **request**. We are ***asking*** someone to do something.

1. Close the window.

This is an **instruction**. We are ***telling*** someone to do something.

# of 20 – Changing a request into an instruction - example

Here is a request:

‘The dog smells terrible. Please can you take it outside?’

To change it into an instruction; start with the imperative by telling someone what to do and get rid of any extra words.

Here is the instruction:

‘**Take** the dog outside. ‘

# of 20 – Question 7

Which sentence below is a request?

1. Please take off your shoes.
2. Take off your shoes.

The sentence ‘please take off your shoes’ is a **request** because it is ***asking*** someone to do something.

# of 20 – Question 8

# Which sentence below is an instruction?

# Would you mind shutting the door?

# Shut the door.

# The sentence ‘shut the door’ is an instruction because it is telling someone to do something.

# of 20 – Question 9

Which of the following phrases are requests and which are instructions?

# Please don’t shout.

# You are not allowed to bring pets to college.

# Don’t eat in here.

# Don’t shout.

# Don’t bring pets to college.

# You shouldn’t eat in here.

# Answer: **1, 2 and 6** are requests and **3, 4 and 5** are instructions.

# of 20 – Question 10

Which of the following phrases are requests and which are instructions?

1. Please come here.
2. Would you mind speaking quietly?
3. Sit next to me.
4. I would appreciate it if you could sit next to me.
5. Speak quietly.
6. Come here.

Answer: **1, 2 and 4** are requests and **3, 5 and 6** are instructions.

# of 20 – Question 11

# Match the words to the sentences below:

# **Put, Boil, Stir, Add, Pour**

# \_\_\_\_ some water.

# \_\_\_\_ a teaspoon of coffee into a cup.

# \_\_\_\_ the hot water into the cup.

# \_\_\_\_ a little milk.

# \_\_\_\_ the cup of coffee.

# The answers are:

# **Boil** some water.

# **Put** a teaspoon of coffee into a cup.

# **Pour** the hot water into the cup.

# **Add** a little milk.

# **Stir** the cup of coffee.

# of 20 – End

# Well done. You have completed this session on imperatives.

# In this session you have learnt:

# What imperatives are

# How to identify imperatives

# How to use imperatives

# If you have any questions about any of these topics, make a note and ask your tutor for more help.