

# IMPERATIVE VERBS

As you have already learned, the indicative mood is used when a verb forms a statement or question of fact. For example, "He runs." or "Does he run?" The imperative mood is used when a verb issues a command. For example, "Go to the store!". In English, there is no special form for an imperative verb. It is recognized by the fact that it uses an implied rather than a stated subject. For example, the only difference between "Go to the store." and "They go to the store." is the lack of an explicit subject in the imperative. In English, the subject of an imperative is often said to be an understood "you".

In Latin, a verb in the imperative mood takes specific endings. For the singular imperative, it takes *-(e)*; for the plural, it takes *-(i)te*. As with the indicative endings *-(i)t* and *-(u)nt*, these same endings are added to the verb stem directly, regardless of its verb pattern or conjugation: a-stem, e-stem, \*-stem, (i)-stem, and i-stem.

As with indicative endings, the imperative endings *-(e)* and *-(i)te* have variable vowels, designated in parentheses, that drop out when a stem ends in a vowel. This again prevents two vowels from being pronounced side-by-side. However, because the singular imperative ending *-(e)* consists of only a variable vowel, the ending frequently drops out entirely. For example, an a-verb such as *fla-* in the singular imperative is simply *fla!* Similarly, a singular imperative of an e-stem verb such as *vide-* or an i-stem verb such as *veni-* drops the singular ending entirely: *vide!* and *veni!*. \*-verbs (that is, any verb ending in a consonant or "u") retain the singular imperative ending: *frange!*, *pone!*, etc. (i)-verbs also retain the singular imperative ending, but drop the "i" from their stem: *percute*, *accipe*, etc.

Plural imperatives drop the variable vowel "i" after a-stem, e-stem, (i)-stem, and i-stem verbs, but retain it in \*-stem verbs.

## Singular and Plural Endings for Imperative Verbs

Type	Sg.	Pl.
*-stem	pon-e	pon-ite
a-stem	fla	fla-te
e-stem	vide	vide-te
(i)-stem	accip-e	accipi-te
i-stem	veni	veni-te