Commands: Tú, Usted & Ustedes

Mandatos

Grammar hints: bold = subject; underline = verb; italics = object; bold with a gray highlight = negation. The labels below each example explain its roles.

Understand it · Entiéndelo

What you are learning · Qué vas a aprender

Core: give and understand common instructions to one familiar person (tú). Next: learn each positive command with its negative partner. Also recognize instructions to one person respectfully (usted) or a group (ustedes); you do not need to master every command form here.

English	Spanish
Open the door. (tú)	Abre la puerta. Abre: Verb — action or state
Do not open the door. (tú)	No abras la puerta. abras: Verb — action or state
Open the door. (usted)	Abra la puerta. Abra: Verb — action or state

Build it step by step · Constrúyelo paso a paso

English	Spanish
Open the book. (ustedes)	Abran el libro. Abran: Verb — action or state
Do not open the book. (ustedes)	No abran el libro. abran: Verb — action or state

Try it · Inténtalo

Ask one friend to open the door, then tell that friend not to open it.

Self-check · Comprueba tu respuesta

Abre la puerta. No abras la puerta. Use Abra with usted and Abran with ustedes.

Common mistake · Error común

Do not simply put no before an affirmative tú command: Abre → No abras.

Do this / Don’t do this: learn the pairs · Hazlo / No lo hagas: aprende los pares

Page 1 of 3 · v0.62.0 · © 2026 Mark Tervan. All rights reserved.

Commands: Tú, Usted & Ustedes

Mandatos

Learn the pair first · Aprende primero el par

Read the positive and negative instructions together: Abre → No abras; Habla → No hables; Come → No comas; Ven → No vengas; Pon → No pongas. Regular affirmative tú commands match the present él/ella form. Recognize and reuse the negative and respectful pairs here; Course: Present Subjunctive Forms later explains their formation. Spanish come means “eat”; ven means “come”.

English	Spanish
Open the window, please. (tú)	Abre la ventana, por favor.
Close the window, please. (tú)	Cierra la ventana, por favor.
Speak slowly. (tú)	Habla despacio.
Do not speak so fast. (tú)	No hables tan rápido.
Eat here. (tú)	Come aquí.
Do not eat here. (tú)	No comas aquí.
Come here. (tú)	Ven aquí.
Do not come yet. (tú)	No vengas todavía.

Use it in real life · Úsalo en la vida real

Core task: give a family member three home instructions, including one negative instruction. Ask your partner to explain each action; alone, write each instruction and its intended action. Practice the open/close pairs in Home: Around the House & Repairs. Recognition extension: compare Pase / Pasen and Espere / Esperen. Which is for one visitor and which is for a group? Reuse the taught pairs before trying unfamiliar verbs.

Check and try again · Comprueba y vuelve a intentar

Possible core instructions: Abre la ventana. No comas aquí. Pon el libro aquí. Check the action, positive/negative meaning, and listener. Replace no abre with no abras and repeat the pair. Change an object or location on a second round. Recognition extension: Pase and Espere address one visitor as usted; Pasen and Esperen address a group. Success means a listener understands your familiar instructions, not that you can form every command.

Common mistake · Error común

Do not make a negative tú command by adding no to the affirmative form. Abre pairs with no abras; ven pairs with no vengas. Learn each useful pair together.

One person or a group · Una persona o un grupo

 © 2026 Mark Tervan. All rights reserved.

Commands: Tú, Usted & Ustedes

Mandatos

Choose your listener · Elige a tu interlocutor

Tú is for one familiar person; usted for one person respectfully; ustedes for a group. Start with the familiar pairs, then recognize Pase / Pasen and Espere / Esperen. Por favor softens an instruction. To ask a favor, you can also use ¿Puedes abrir la puerta, por favor?

English	Spanish
Come in, please. (usted)	Pase, por favor.
Wait here, please. (usted)	Espere aquí, por favor.
Do not close the door. (usted)	No cierre la puerta.
Come in, please. (ustedes)	Pasen, por favor.
Wait here, please. (ustedes)	Esperen aquí, por favor.
Do not close the door. (ustedes)	No cierren la puerta.
Put the book here. (tú)	Pon el libro aquí.
Do not put the book there. (tú)	No pongas el libro ahí.

Later reference: formation and pronouns · Referencia para después

For later study: regular negative tú uses -es for -ar and -as for -er/-ir (no hables, no comas, no abras); usted uses -e or -a (hable, coma, abra), and ustedes adds -n. Common irregular affirmative tú forms are di, haz, ve, pon, sal, sé, ten, ven. Broader formation, stem changes, and spelling changes belong in Course: Present Subjunctive Forms. Keep full nouns for now. Affirmative commands later attach object pronouns (ábrela); negative commands put them before the verb (no la abras). Course: Direct Object Pronouns and Course: Two Pronouns & Placement explain placement and written accents.

Try it · Inténtalo

Ask one visitor to wait respectfully, then ask a group to wait. What changes in the verb?

Self-check · Comprueba tu respuesta

Espere aquí, por favor. → Esperen aquí, por favor. The added -n marks the group addressed as ustedes; por favor softens both instructions.

Common mistake · Error común

Do not address several people with a singular command. Abra is for usted; abran is for ustedes. Choose who you are speaking to before choosing the command.

 © 2026 Mark Tervan. All rights reserved.