In addition to tense and voice, verbs also express mood.

- A verb expresses one of three moods: the **indicative mood**, the **imperative mood**, or the **subjunctive mood**.

The indicative mood—the most frequently used—makes a statement or asks a question. The imperative mood expresses a command or makes a request.

**INDICATIVE MOOD**  
She takes the bus home.

**IMPERATIVE MOOD**  
Take the bus home.

The subjunctive mood, although often replaced by the indicative mood in informal English, has two important uses in contemporary formal English.

1. To express, indirectly, a demand, recommendation, suggestion, or statement of necessity.
   
   We demand [or recommend or suggest] that she take the bus home.  
   [The subjunctive mood drops the -s from the third-person singular.]  
   It is necessary that you be home before dark. [The subjunctive mood uses be instead of am, is, or are.]

2. To state a condition or a wish that is contrary to fact. Notice that this use of the subjunctive always requires the past tense.
   
   If she were late, she would take the bus home. [The subjunctive mood uses were, not was.]
   
   I wish that I were a genius.

**Exercise 25  ** Expressing the Imperative Mood in Sentences

The verb in each sentence below expresses the indicative mood. Rewrite the sentence to express the imperative mood.

1. She leaves right away.
2. He always drives carefully.
3. She practices the piano every day.
4. He leaves nothing to chance.
5. She prepares herself mentally to succeed.
Exercise 26 Using the Indicative and Subjunctive Moods

For each of the following sentences, first determine whether the verb should express the indicative or the subjunctive mood. Then write the sentence, supplying the appropriate form of the verb in parentheses.

A Tennis Lesson

1. My sister Antonia’s tennis instructor (teach) people of all ages and levels of ability.
2. Antonia, who practices for an hour a day six times a week, wishes that she (be) an expert player like Steffi Graf or André Agassi.
3. I told her, “If I (be) you, I would consider working at least an hour a day on my serve alone.”
4. Antonia has learned that in order to hit the ball with a good forehand stroke, it is important that she (prepare) for the ball.
5. Good players (shift) their weight forward during the stroke.
6. If my sister is to play her very best game of tennis, it is vital that she (play) on a clay court rather than on a grass court.
7. It (be) important that a player (have) a good sense of balance.
8. If the net (be) six inches high instead of the regulation thirty-six inches, it would be much easier for me to serve effectively.
9. Antonia (want) me to take tennis lessons from her tennis instructor too.
10. She thinks if I (be) willing to apply myself, which I am, we would make a formidable doubles team.

Exercise 27 Supplying the Correct Subjunctive Form

Rewrite each sentence so that at least one verb expresses the subjunctive mood and the idea indicated in parentheses. You may need to change the pronoun for the sentence to make sense.

SAMPLE I go to the store and buy a notebook. (statement contrary to fact)
ANSWER If I were to go to the store, I would buy a notebook.

1. She gets extra practice in math. (recommendation)
2. We shot better in the second half and made four more points and won the game. (condition contrary to fact)
3. I am skiing in the Alps. (wish)
4. He completes the training program. (statement of necessity)
5. People walk on Mars and weigh only about a third of what they do on Earth. (condition contrary to fact)
6. We receive a pay raise of 5 percent per year for the next three years. (demand)
7. I can find time to do my homework. (wish)
8. He keeps his eye on the ball without getting distracted by the other players. (suggestion)
9. She spends more time helping and less time complaining. (wish)
10. Three football fields placed end to end are still shorter than the length of the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln. (condition contrary to fact)
Exercise 28  Understanding the Use of Verb Moods

Explain the difference in purpose between the sentences in each pair below. Identify the mood (indicative, imperative, or subjunctive) used in each sentence.

SAMPLE  
(a) He waited until Saturday.  
(b) Wait until Saturday.

ANSWER  
Sentence a makes a statement. (indicative)  
Sentence b gives a command. (imperative)

1. a. I am going to the beach for a week.  
   b. I wish I could go to the beach for a week.

2. a. If you were to break a complicated problem down into simpler parts, it would be easier to solve.  
   b. Break a complicated problem down into simpler parts, and it will be easier to solve.

3. a. If I didn’t have to do this homework now, I could go to the movies tonight.  
   b. I don’t have to do this homework now, so I can go to the movies tonight.

4. a. She passes the ball to the player who can make the shot.  
   b. Pass the ball to the player who can make the shot.

5. a. If we had more time, we could do a better job.  
   b. We had more time, so we could do a better job.

6. a. We recommend that you don’t take this medicine with meals.  
   b. Don’t take this medicine with meals.

7. a. This computer has a large amount of memory that can store all of our data.  
   b. If this computer had a larger amount of memory, it could store all of our data.

8. a. It is necessary that you follow these directions exactly.  
   b. Follow these instructions exactly.

9. a. José watched carefully so that he could give an accurate report.  
   b. If José had watched carefully, he could have given an accurate report.

10. a. Letitia wished that the dog would stop barking.  
    b. Stop barking, right now!

11. a. Would you like to leave now?  
    b. Please leave now.

12. a. The company demands that everyone arrive on time.  
    b. Everyone always arrives on time.

13. a. Dad suggested that Tony give the dog a bath.  
    b. Tony often gives the dog a bath.

14. a. Try to improve your handwriting.  
    b. If I were you, I would try to improve my handwriting.

15. a. The bus driver refuses to wait more than two minutes for stragglers.  
    b. The principal recommended that the bus driver refuse to wait for stragglers.

Exercise 29  Using the Imperative Mood in Writing Instructions

Write a set of instructions that explains how to do something, step by step. (For example, you can explain how to start a computer, program a VCR, or drive to a particular destination.) Include at least five steps. Use the imperative mood in writing each instruction.