The Subjunctive
in Spanish
Grammar
in a nutshell
The Subjunctive

The subjunctive is an important difference between Spanish and English and particular care must be taken in order to use it correctly. It is generally described as a "mood" and not a tense. This does not necessarily help the learner. However, this helps us to understand that in certain instances the use of the subjunctive gives some idea as to the feelings of the speaker regarding a subject. Nevertheless, there are many instances where the subjunctive must be used and you have to learn all of these. As the subjunctive has practically disappeared from English we cannot rely on our own intuition as to when the subjunctive may be used. Basically, you have to sit down and learn it.

Formation of the Subjunctive

Take the first person singular of the present tense, remove the "o" and add the appropriate endings depending on whether it is an -ar verb or an -er/-ir verb. That's all there is to it.

- **ar**
  - comprar
  - comprender
  - comprar
  - comprener

- **er**
  - beber
  - beber

- **ir**
  - recibir

The above verbs are in the present subjunctive. The first thing to notice about them is the endings. It is almost as if the verbs in the present subjunctive have a sudden identity crisis: -ar verbs use the endings of the -er verbs and -er and -ir verbs use the endings of -ar verbs.

Formation exercise

Work out the "I" form of the present subjunctive for these verbs. Firstly work out the first person of the present tense and then work out the subjunctive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>First person of the present tense</th>
<th>First person of the present subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abrir</td>
<td>compre</td>
<td>recibe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bailar</td>
<td>beba</td>
<td>beba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caer</td>
<td>recibir</td>
<td>recibir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salir</td>
<td>beban</td>
<td>beban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aparecer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB Note that verbs such as llegar add a "u" to keep the sound, e.g. llegue.

Of course, as you would expect, some verbs are beyond all help and are completely irregular. Here are some of the most frequent ones:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>First person of the present tense</th>
<th>First person of the present subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ir</td>
<td>voy</td>
<td>vaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saber</td>
<td>sé</td>
<td>sepa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>estar</td>
<td>estoy</td>
<td>esté</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dar</td>
<td>doy</td>
<td>dé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ser</td>
<td>soy</td>
<td>sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haber</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>haya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of the subjunctive
After "cuando" (or similar expressions) when referring to the future or possibility

Look at these sentences and translate them into English:

Cuando tenga 17 años voy a aprender a conducir.
Cuando vuelva dile que quiero hablar con él en seguida.
Cuando sea mayor quiero ser periodista.

You will have noticed that in the English sentences "when" is followed by a normal present tense. This is not the case in the Spanish sentences. Instead of the normal present tense forms, (tengo, vuelve, soy) there are three unfamiliar forms: tenga, vuelva, sea. This form of the verb is the subjunctive.

So, how do you use the subjunctive? You cannot simply use it every time you come across cuando. Look at these sentences for example:

Cuando era pequeña me gustaba coleccionar sellos.
Cuando hace buen tiempo vamos a la piscina todos los días.
Cuando cumplí los 16 años me regalaron una moto.

The difference between these sentences and the subjunctive sentences is that the ones immediately above do not use the present subjunctive and they refer to events that do happen on a regular basis or that did happen or have happened.

When I was small I liked ...
When the weather is good we go ...
When I reached the age of 16 they gave me ...

So, the sentences that do use the present subjunctive refer to events that will happen or that have not yet happened.

NB. "Hasta que" meaning "until" works in exactly the same way as "cuando".

Exercise
Complete the following sentences with the correct part of the present subjunctive.

1. Podremos hacerlo cuando (hacer) .................... sol.
2. Podremos hacerlo cuando (volver) .................... mi padre.
3. Podremos hacerlo cuando (venir) .................... mis amigos.
5. Cuando (detenerse) .................... el autocar, voy a bajar.
6. No podré dormir hasta que mis padres (llegar) ....................
7. No puedo hacer nada hasta que tú (salir) .................... de aquí.
8. Cuando (cumplir) .................... los 18 años, puedes hacer lo que quieras.
9. Cuando (descubrir) .................... lo que has hecho van a estar furiosos contigo.
10. Cuando (aparecer) .................... tu hermano, dile que me gustaría hablar con él.
LUZ CASAL – Piensa en mí

Si tienes un hondo penar, piensa en mí.
Si tienes ganas de llorar, piensa en mí.
Ya ves que venero tu imagen divina,
tu párula boca que siendo tan niña
me enseñó a pecar.

Piensa en mí cuando ____________________,
cuando ____________________,
también piensa en mí.
Cuando ____________________,
quitarme la vida, no lo quiero para nada,
para nada me sirve sin tí.

Piensa en mí cuando ____________________,
cuando ____________________,
también piensa en mí,
cuando ____________________,
quitarme la vida, no lo quiero para nada,
para nada me sirve sin tí.

Piensa en mí cuando ____________________,
cuando ____________________,
también piensa en mí,
cuando ____________________,
quitarme la vida, para nada, para nada
me sirve sin tí.
The subjunctive after verbs of wanting and requesting

Can you see what these sentences have in common?

¿Quieres que yo te lave esto?
Quiero que usted me devuelva mi dinero.
Quiere que me ayudes

You probably saw that they are all about wanting other people to do things. This is a useful way of asking people whether they want things done and of getting people to do things without being too blunt.

Now look at these examples and say what happens to the second verb in each sentence:

Quiero que usted repare esto.
I want you to repair this.
Quiero que tú veas la ciudad.
I want you to see the town.
Quiero que limpies tus zapatos.
I want you to clean your shoes.
Queremos que hables español.
We want you to speak Spanish.

As you can see, each of the second verbs has que in front and is in the present subjunctive.

Exercise 1
Express your wishes by changing these statements of what a friend has not done into statements of what you wish your friend would do. Write down the new statements, for example:

No has visitado Sitges.
Quiero que visites Sitges.

No has visto la catedral.
Quiero que veas la catedral.

1. No has hablado español.
2. No has visitado mi país.
3. No has comido turrones.
4. No has subido a la cumbre.
5. No has visto los cuadros.
6. No has escrito a tus padres.
7. No has bebido horchata.

Exercise 2
Show that you can express wishes about other people by changing these statements of what people must do into statements of what you wish they would do. Write down the new statements, for example:

Creo que él tiene que lavar el coche.
Quiero que él lave el coche.

Nos parece que el tendero tiene que cambiar la camiseta.
Queremos que el tendero cambie la camiseta.
1. Me parece que él tiene que hacer sus excusas.
2. Creo que usted tiene que devolver mi dinero.
3. Nos parece que nuestro profesor tiene que hablar más despacio.
4. Creemos que los chicos tienen que encontrarnos a las seis.
5. El opina que nosotros tenemos que hablar español.
6. El cree que yo tengo que escribirle primero.
7. Ellos creen que nosotros tenemos que contestar cuanto antes.
8. A ti te parece que yo tengo que volver antes de medianoche.

The following expressions of good wishes are really the second halves of longer sentences. Can you guess what the longer sentences were?

¡ Que lo pases bien !
Have a good time
¡ Que te diviertas !
Enjoy yourself !

The original sentences were:

Quiero que lo pases bien.
Quiero que te diviertas.

This manner of giving good wishes is extremely common in Spanish.

Exercise - Now you can write what these sentences mean, and what the original sentences were:

1. ¡ Que aproveches tu estancia en España !
2. ¡ Que tengas buena suerte !
3. ¡ Que todo te vaya bien !
4. ¡ Que tengas buen viaje !
5. ¡ Que nos veamos el año que viene !
6. ¡ Que Dios nos ayude !
Sufre como yo – Albert Plá

Yo quiero que tú __________ lo que yo sufro
y aprenderé a rezar para lograrlo
yo quiero que te __________ tan inútil
como un vaso sin whisky entre las manos
y que __________ en tu pecho
    el corazón
como si __________ de otro
    y te __________.

    yo te deseo la muerte
    donde tú __________
y aprenderé a rezar para lograrlo

    yo quiero que tú __________
    lo que yo sufro
    y aprenderé a rezar para lograrlo

Yo quiero que te __________
a cada hora
    como un preso aferrado
    a su ventana
y que te __________ las piedras de la calle
    el único paisaje de tus ojos.

    yo te deseo la muerte
    donde tu __________
por dios que y aprenderé a rezar para lograrlo
The Subjunctive – exercise

Translate the following sentences into Spanish:

1. I want you to open the window.
2. I want to buy a car.
3. I don’t want him to go out.
4. I don’t want them to hear me.
5. I want to go to the beach with you.
6. He wants me to help him.
7. He wants to go to the party.
8. My exchange partner wants me to do her English homework.
9. They want to go on holiday with us.
10. Do you want me to help you?
The subjunctive and verbs of emotion

Here is another example of the use of the subjunctive:

Mis padres esperan que me quede en el instituto el año que viene.
A mis profesores les gusta que trabaje.
A mi tutor le gusta que sea puntual.

All these sentences talk about the hopes, wishes, desires, likes and fears of one person or a group of people, with regard to the actions of another person or group of people. Here are some common examples:

- Siento que no vengas.
- Me da pena que lo digas.
- ¿Te alegras de que se vaya?

If you look at the verbs which are followed by a present subjunctive, you will see that they all have certain things in common. Here they are:

- .... esperan que ....
- .... les gusta que ....
- .... quieren que ....
- .... le gusta que ....
- Temo que ....
- Siento que ....
- Me da pena que ....
- ¿Te alegras de que ....
- No me avergüenzo de que ....
- Quiero que ....
- Estar enojado de que ....

They all have the following in common:

a. They are all in the present tense.
b. They are all followed by que.
c. They all convey to the reader or listener an attitude.

These verbs are usually referred to as "verbs of emotion" because they tell us about people's feelings with regard to events and actions. And verbs of emotion with regard to the actions of another person or group of people must be followed by a subjunctive.

Exercise 1
When considering your future, remember that other people have an interest too. Can you complete these sentences so that they are appropriate for you?

1. Mis padres esperan que ....
2. Mi madre/madrastra quiere que ....
3. Mi tutor/a quiere que ....
4. Mis profesores esperan que ....
5. Mi profesor de español espera que ....
Exercise 2
For each of the following by putting the verb in brackets into the correct form of the subjunctive.

1. Me resulta completamente indiferente que [venir - tú] o no.
2. ¿ No te extraña que nunca [salir - ella] de casa ?
3. Le enfada que su hijo no [estudiar].
5. Tienen miedo de que [ir - nosotros] a descubrir su secreto.
7. No le gusta que [salir - yo] contigo.
8. Esperan que sus padres les [poder - ellos] ayudar con sus deberes.
10. Mis padres esperan que no [suspender - yo] ninguna asignatura.
The subjunctive after impersonal expressions of evaluation or judgement

You must always use the subjunctive in this instance. "Evaluation" or "judgement" covers a vast range of possibilities including regret, pleasure, displeasure and surprise. However, it is important to differentiate between value judgements and statements of fact such as "es verdad que", "es obvio que" etc. which do not require a subjunctive. Some examples of expressions of evaluation or judgement are:

- Es natural que
- ¡Qué pena que ...
- Es una vergüenza que
- Es necesario que
- Basta que
- Es una lástima que
- Es una casualidad que
- ¡Qué rabia que ...
- Ya es hora que
- Me parece mal que
- Me parece bien
- Es justo que
- Es una lástima que
- Me molesta que
- Me sorprende que
- Me alegra que
- Me importa un bledo que
- Me irrita que

Exceptions (which do not require the subjunctive)

- Menos mal que
- Es mejor que

Exercise - Translate the following into Spanish

1. It annoys me that they are unable to come to Spain with us.
2. It's pure chance that I am here.
3. It's time that you face up to reality.
4. I couldn't care less whether you telephone him.
5. Thank heavens you're safe!
6. It's such a nuisance that we have to arrive so early.
7. It annoys me that they are so apathetic.
8. It's only natural that she should want to be with her family at Christmas.
Subjunctive after statements of command or influence

If you wish to express a command or influence over another person or group of people in Spanish, the subjunctive is required in the second verb after "que". Verbs of influence or command are those which involve wanting, ordering, advising prohibiting, allowing, causing or avoiding. Remember that the command or influence must be over a different person or group of people, otherwise the infinitive is used.

e.g. El médico me aconseja que me acueste temprano.
    Quiero acostarme temprano.

Examples of verbs of influence or command are:

- mandar
- ordenar
- rogar
- hacer
- impedir
- prohibir
- permitir
- consentir
- aconsejar
- dejar
- evitar
- decir

Some examples of impersonal statements are:

- Hace falta que
- Es preciso que
- Importa que

Some examples of the use of the subjunctive after statements of command or influence are:

Te aconsejo que lo hagas.
I advise you to do it.

Mi madre siempre me dice que vuelva a casa temprano.
My mother always tells me to go to come home early.

Exercise
Translate the following into Spanish:

1. I forbid you to go out.
2. She makes us work hard.
3. They are requesting us to enter the building quietly.
4. My parents allow me to go out at the weekend.
5. It is essential that you tell the truth.
**After verbs or expressions expressing doubt or denial**

After expressions / verbs expressing doubt or denial the subjunctive is required in the second verb after "que". Remember that the doubt must be over a different person or group of people, otherwise

The subjunctive is not needed.

**Dudo** que él tenga mi número de teléfono. *(I doubt that he has my phone number.)*

**Niegan** que los extraterrestres existan. *(They deny that aliens exist.)*

Tú **niegas** que la camisa sea mía. *(You deny that the shirt is mine.)*

**Verbs That Express Doubt**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dudar</td>
<td>to doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negar</td>
<td>to deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no estar convencido/a de</td>
<td>to not be convinced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no estar seguro/a de</td>
<td>to not be sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no imaginarse</td>
<td>to not imagine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no parecer</td>
<td>to not seem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no pensar</td>
<td>to not think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no suponer</td>
<td>to not suppose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temer</td>
<td>to suspect, to fear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**quizás/tal vez** = perhaps *(The use of the subjunctive is optional with these words)*

1. I doubt that they are coming to the party.

2. She denies that it it true.

3. It does not seem that the weather is going to improve today.

4. We fear that the Government is going to lower taxes.

5. Apart from watching TV I can't imagine that there is much to do here.
Subjunctive after verbs of knowing, perceiving, stating or communicating when used negatively

If the main verb denotes knowledge, stating, communicating, the following verb is in the indicative (i.e. not in the subjunctive) unless the main verb contains a negative. This also applies to statements of fact like es verdad / cierto / indudable / seguro que, etc. However, the subjunctive is often optional after such negatives, depending on the degree of uncertainty involved. In some cases the subjunctive causes a slight change of meaning:

- Digo que es así  I say that it is so
- No digo que sea así I don't say that it so
- Creo que él le conoce I think he knows him
- No creo que él le conozca I don't think he knows him

Translate the following sentences into Spanish:

1. I see you have had your hair cut.
2. I can't see (i.e. don't believe) you've had your hair cut.
3. I don't believe it's true.
4. This doesn't mean that the Government is going to lower taxes.
5. Apart from watching TV I can't see that there is anything to do.

Notes

A. _No es que_ requires a subjunctive, but not in questions:

- No es que yo diga que es mentira It's not that I'm saying that it's a lie
- ¿ No será que no quiere hacerlo ? Isn't it the case that he doesn't want to do it ?

B. Subjunctive after _comprender_ and _explicar_

_Comprender_ takes the subjunctive when it means "to sympathize":

- Comprendo que no quieras pedir dinero prestado I understand your not wanting to borrow money

_Explicar_ usually takes the subjunctive except when it really means "to state" or "to say":

- Esto explica que las mutaciones de la literatura estén estrechamente ligadas a las inovaciones técnicas
  This explains how changes in literature are intimately linked to technical innovations

But:

- Manuel explicó que había estado enfermo
  Manuel explained that he has been ill
The subjunctive in relative clauses when the antecedent is not yet known or experienced.

Spanish uses the subjunctive in such cases to express a nuance which English usually ignores. Compare "los que digan eso" (if anyone does) and "los que dicen eso" "the people who say that" (and they exist). The difference in Spanish is striking. Contrast:

Prefiero un coche que tenga cuatro puertas
I prefer a car with four doors (i.e. any car)

Prefiero ese coche que tiene cuatro puertas
I prefer that car with four doors.

Busco un médico que sepa acupuntura
I'm looking for a doctor (i.e. any) who knows acupuncture

Conozco a un médico que sabe acupuntura
I know a doctor who knows acupuncture

B. Subjunctive in relative clauses when the existence of the antecedent is denied

If the antecedent does not exist, the verb in the relative clause [i.e. the part of the sentence following "que"] is in the subjunctive.

No hay nadie que sepa tocar la guitarra como él
There is no-one who can play the guitar like he can

Nada hay en él que pueda ofender directamente al Gobierno
There's nothing in it that could directly offend the Government

Exercise - Translate the following sentences into Spanish:

1. I am looking for a house with four bedrooms.
2. I am looking for a cat that is called Tabby.
3. There is no-one who can understand her.

The subjunctive after a superlative

Only in the present perfect tense:

Es el mejor hombre que jamás haya (or he) visto. He is the best man I have ever seen.

Es el maestro más inteligente que jamás haya (or ha) venido a esta escuela. He is the most intelligent teacher that has ever come to this school.

Exercise - Translate the following two sentences into Spanish:

1. it is the best book that I have ever read.
2. He is the most annoying boy that I have ever met.
**Subjunctive after subordinators**

The subjunctive is always used after the following expressions:

- a que
- a fin de que
- para que
- con el objeto de que  
  in order to, so that
- con el propósito de que
- con la intención de que
- no fuera que
- de ahí que  
  this is why
- así que
- conque  
  so (that)
- de modo que
- de manera que
- como si  
  as if (always followed by the imperfect subjunctive)
- sin que
  without
- con tal (de) que
- siempre que
- siempre y cuando que
- a condición de que  
  on condition that
- bajo (la) condición de que
- a no ser que
- salvo que
- excepto que
- a menos que
- como no sea que
- a cambio de que  
  in exchange for
- aunque  
  although, even if
- aun cuando

**N.B.** aunque is followed by an indicative when it has the meaning of "although"

- a pesar de que  
  despite the fact that
- pese a que
- suponiendo que  
  supposing
- en caso de que  
  in case
N.B. "porque" is normally followed by the indicative but requires the subjunctive when it means "just because/only because" and the main verb is a negative. Sometimes it can be preceded by "sólo":

Porque tú lo digas, no voy a callarme
I'm not going to shut up just because you say so

Exercise

Translate the following into Spanish

1. I've come here so that you can tell me the truth.
2. I've written a letter so that my family knows about it.
3. His father died from a drunken fit, that's why he doesn't drink.
4. This is why the Pope has put pressure on the new Government.
5. You've only got yourself to blame so you can't complain.
6. I'll be late so you don't have to prepare anything.
7. You must do it without my having to tell you.
8. I will go to the beach unless it rains.
9. I'll put your sunglasses in your suitcase in case you need them.
10. I'll buy you dinner provided that you let me choose the restaurant.
11. I'll marry you unless you've changed your mind.
12. He won't confess even if they kill him.
13. I'm not going to go out with you just because you've got a Ferrari.
Translating "whenever..." or "however", "whatever", "whoever", "whichever" and "the more ..."

After the following expressions the subjunctive is used when referring to an event which has or had not yet happened:

- *comoquiera que*  
- *por mucho / muy + adj. que*  
- *dondequiera que*  
- *cualquiera (cualquier) que*  
- *cualquier cosa que*  
- *cuandoquiera que*
  
- *however*  
- *however much / or + adjective*  
- *wherever*  
- *whichever / anyone who*  
- *whatever*  
- *whoever / anyone who*  
- *The more .... the more ....*  
- *whenever*  

Translate the following sentences into Spanish:

1. However you do it, she will always say that you are wrong.

2. He won't do it however much you ask.

3. However clever he is he won't succeed.

4. Whenever you feel lonely, phone me.

5. Wherever I go, I see him.

6. Anyone who sees you will think you're going to a party.

7. The more he eats the more he will want.

8. He knows that the more he drinks, the more violent he becomes.
The imperfect subjunctive

In order to form the imperfect subjunctive you take the third person plural of the preterite tense e.g. hablaron + you take off the -ron and add the endings as follows:

**HABLAR**
- hablara
- hablaras
- hablala
- hablaramos
- hablarais
- hablaran

**COMER**
- comiera
- comieras
- comiera
- comieramos
- comierais
- comieran

**VIVIR**
- viviera
- vivieras
- viviera
- vivieramos
- vivierais
- vivieran

The imperfect subjunctive will be used in the same way as the present subjunctive. However, it will follow a past tense sequence (see sheet on tense sequence).

**Conditional sentences beginning with “if”**

The imperfect subjunctive also has one use which is specific to itself, i.e. it is not the case for the present subjunctive. This is in unfulfilled or remote conditions;

**Example:**
If he were to come to the party I would stay.

*Si viniera a la fiesta, me quedaría.*

If I had more money I would buy a house.

*Si tuviera más dinero, compraría una casa.*

**Exercise** - Translate the following sentences into Spanish:

1. If I **were** president I would improve the economy of this country.
2. If it **were to rain**, I would not be able to go to the match.
3. If it **were** true, I would go to the police.
4. If I **were** you, I would go home.
5. If I **had known**, I would have told you.
Beyoncé – Si yo fuera un chico

Si yo fuera un chico
sólo _____ una vez
yo me ______ como quiero, con lo que ____ primero
y me voy...

_______ a buscar chicas _____ montón
mis amigos que son leales,
siempre van a __________ hasta el fin
    cada noche a vivir

Si yo fuera un chico
sé que ______ saber,
comprender mucho mejor lo que es _____ a una mujer.
________ escuchar,
pues _______ el dolor
de perder a quien se quiere porque _________ lo que tienes
y _________ sin saber que pasó

Si yo fuera un chico,
pero _____ no lo soy
Los chicos _______ de molde
y nosotras _______ de corazón
    Se piensan que son
    los del sexo _______
    pero cuando los queremos
    los vence _______ seducción
    .... seducción

Si yo fuera un chico
se que ______ saber,
comprender mucho mejor lo que es _______ a una mujer.
________ escuchar,
pues _______ el dolor
de perder a quien se quiere porque _________ lo que tienes
y _________ sin saber que pasó

Es muy tarde, ya ves, para _______
___________ otra vez ya no lo vas a _______
    el lugar que _______ tú, ya no está más

Pero eres un chico,
qué le vas a hacer (no puedes comprender)
    que se siente ____ comprenderme
    o ____ amar en serio a una mujer
    no sabes escuchar
    no te _______ el dolor
    hasta que _______ a quien _______
    porque _________ lo que tienes
    y _________ sin saber que pasó

Pero eres un chico...
The Conditional tense (REVISION)

The conditional tense in English is translated as *I would speak*, etc. It is often used with the imperfect subjunctive in sentences such as “If I were .... I would ......” The second half of the sentence would be in the conditional + it translates as “would + verb”.

To form this tense, you take the future stem (which is generally the infinitive) and add the –ER/-IR imperfect endings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HABLAR</th>
<th>COMER</th>
<th>VIVIR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Hablaría</td>
<td>Comería</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>Hablarías</td>
<td>Comerías</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/She</td>
<td>Hablaría</td>
<td>Comería</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>Hablaríamos</td>
<td>Comeríamos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>Hablaríais</td>
<td>Comeríais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>Hablarían</td>
<td>Comerían</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three above are regular verbs. Remember a number of Spanish verbs have irregular future stems. The endings are still the same as regular verbs only the stem changes. Here is a list of the most common ones:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFINITIVE</th>
<th>TRANSLATION</th>
<th>STEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caber</td>
<td>To fit</td>
<td>Cabr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decir</td>
<td>To say</td>
<td>Dir-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haber (auxiliary verb)</td>
<td>To have</td>
<td>Habr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hacer</td>
<td>To do/make</td>
<td>Har-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poder</td>
<td>To be able</td>
<td>Podr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poner</td>
<td>To put</td>
<td>Pondr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Querer</td>
<td>To want</td>
<td>Querr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saber</td>
<td>To know</td>
<td>Sabr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salir</td>
<td>To leave/go out</td>
<td>Saldr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tener</td>
<td>To have</td>
<td>Tendr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtener</td>
<td>To obtain, get</td>
<td>Obtendr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valer</td>
<td>To be worth</td>
<td>Valdr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venir</td>
<td>To come</td>
<td>Vendr-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hay | There is / are | Habría | There would be

Exercise - Translate the following sentences into Spanish:

1. I would live in Spain (vivir = to live)
2. She would visit Japan. (visitar = to visit)
3. They would continue their studies. (continuar = to continue)
4. We would relax. (descansar = to relax)
5. You (sing.) would take a gap year. (tomar – to take)
6. I would go to university. (ir = to go)
Si ...
Complete the following sentences saying what you would do. You will need to use the conditional tense.

1. Si tuviera mucho dinero ...
2. Si fuera primer/a ministro/a ...
3. Si mi hada madrina me concediera tres deseos ...
4. Si pudiera cambiar algo de mi vida ...
5. Si fuera director/a de mi colegio ....
6. Si pudiera hacer algo para mejorar mis clases de español...
7. Si fuese posible viajar en el tiempo ...
8. Si tuviera que definir la felicidad ...
9. Si descubriera que mi mejor amigo/a fuera drogadicto/a ...
10. Si tuviera que organizar una excursión para mi grupo de español ...
The imperfect subjunctive – another use for it !!!

Another use for the imperfect subjunctive is to say sentences along the lines of "What if ... ?", e.g. And what if it were to rain = ¿Y si lloviera?

Exercise

Translate the following sentences into Spanish:

1. What if my parents didn't want me?
2. What if the doctor advised them to get rid of me?
3. What if my mother were worried about me?
4. What if they decided to kill me?
5. What if I were imagining it all?
6. What if it were all a bad dream?
7. What if they loved me after all?
8. What if I was born the most beautiful baby in the world?
9. What if they bought me a Ferrari F40 for my 18th birthday?
Sequence of tenses in the subjunctive

Only specific combinations of tenses are permitted in the subjunctive. The most common combinations in every day speech are present indicative followed by present subjunctive; and the past tenses, with the exception of the perfect tense, are almost always followed by an imperfect or pluperfect subjunctive. The following chart illustrates the most expected combinations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative tense of main verb</th>
<th>Subjunctive tenses permissible in dependent clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present future Imperatives Perfect Future perfect</td>
<td>present subjunctive or perfect subjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect Preterite Conditional Pluperfect Perfect conditional</td>
<td>Imperfect subjunctive or pluperfect subjunctive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The subjunctive in main clauses (i.e. before "que")

There are a few instances when the subjunctive will appear in the main clause before "que". We have already seen this in the imperative. The other instances are:

1. Orders and wishes:
   ¡ Que te diviertas !
   Have a good time !
   Que no te retrases para la cena esta noche.
   Don't be late for dinner tonight

2. Preceded by ojalá (I hope - when followed by the present subjunctive- If only - when followed by the imperfect subjunctive) and quién (If only - when followed by the imperfect subjunctive). Así, used jokingly, paraodies a typical gypsy curse:

   ¡ Ojalá fuera millonario !
   If only I were a millionaire.
   ¡ Quién fuera millonario !
   If only I were a millionaire.
   ¡ Ojalá no llueva !
   I hope it doesn't rain !
   ¡ Así se te pegue mi catarro !
   I hope you get my cold !

3. Subjunctive after words meaning "perhaps", "possibly"
   There are several commonly used words meaning "perhaps": acaso, tal vez, quizá(s), a lo mejor.

   i. Tal vez and quizá(s) may be used with either the subjunctive or the indicative. However, it is important to remember that if the event is still in the future only the future indicative or the present subjunctive may be used, not the present indicative:

      Quizá venga / vendrá mañana
      Perhaps she'll come tomorrow

   ii. Acaso followed by the subjunctive is rather literary in the meaning "perhaps": Acaso sea verdad que ... = Perhaps it is true that ... . However, it is very common in all styles followed by the indicative, particularly in order to add a sarcastic note to questions:

      ¿ Acaso no saben los críticos que esta novela la escribí cuando tenía dieciséis años ?
      Don't the critics know that I wrote this novel when I was sixteen ?

   iii. A lo mejor does not take the subjunctive. Furthermore it is largely confined to spoken language:

      A lo mejor se ha olvidado de ella.
      Maybe he has forgotten her.

4. Some common phrases which are un explainable! You just have to learn them!!!

   i. "O sea que" meaning "in other words":
      Ha dicho que tiene que trabajar, o sea que no quiere venir.
      He said he had to work, in other words he doesn't want to come.

   ii. In the phrases "que yo sepa / que yo recuerde" meaning "as far as I know / remember":

      ...
¿Ha llegado Pepe? No que yo sepa.
Has Pepe arrived? Not as far as I know.

iii. A few miscellaneous phrases:

Acabáramos
Now I see what you're getting at.

Otro gallo nos cantara si le hubiéramos hecho caso
It would have been another story if we had listened to him

¡Cómo tiras el dinero! Ni que fueras millonario...
The way you throw money about anyone would think you were a millionaire

Exercise

Translate the following sentences into Spanish:

1. Don't forget to write!
2. Leave me alone!
3. I hope they can come to the party!
4. I hope you break your leg!
5. If only all my friends were as generous as you!
6. Perhaps they will return the magazine tomorrow.
7. Perhaps we can visit the art gallery tomorrow.
8. She says she's got a headache, in other words she won't be coming to the cinema tonight.
9. As far as I remember he was tall.
10. As far as I know there will be a train strike next week.
Polite commands (usted / ustedes) + negative commands

All polite commands and all negative commands in Spanish use the subjunctive:

Exercise - Look at the road signs below. Select the correct verb and make the correct POLITE negative command.

1. (girar) ____________________ a la izquierda. = No gire a la derecha.
2. (girar) ____________________ a la derecha.
3. (adelantar) ____________________ aquí.
4. (aparacar) ____________________ aquí.
5. (parar) ____________________ aquí.

Exercise - Translate the following into Spanish. They all include formal or negative commands relating to job interview technique.

a) Attend the interview on time. (acudir)

b) Avoid drinking coffee. (evitar)

c) Do not speak without thinking. (hablar)

d) Leave intervals before responding. (dejar)

e) Do not contradict yourself. (contradecirse)

f) Mention your hobbies briefly. (mencionar)

g) Do not forget to say thank you for the interview. (olvidar)
The Subjunctive – Summary Sheet

The subjunctive is used in the following instances:

1. After "cuando", "hasta que", "en cuanto" when referring to the future or possibility.
2. After "querer que" (Also "preferir que", "persuadir que", "rogar que", "pedir que")
3. After verbs of emotion e.g. Estoy contento de que estés aquí
4. Expressions of evaluation e.g. Es justo que haya perdido / Es inútil que les pidamos más
5. Verbs expressing a command e.g. Te prohíbo que salgas
6. After expressions and verbs expressing doubt e.g. Es posible que me lo dé / Dudo que venga / No es seguro que lo haya dicho
7. After verbs of saying, thinking and believing when used negatively e.g No creo que sea verdad
8. After "que" when the antecedent is negative or uncertain e.g. Busco un médico que sepa acupuntura / No hay nadie que piense como yo
9. After superlatives (+ único, último, primero) e.g. Es el mejor cantante que hayamos oído
10. After certain subordinators e.g. "para que" / "a menos que" / "no es que" etc.
11. After expressions such as "comoquier que" (however), "dondequier que" (wherever), "comoquier que" (however), etc. e.g. Cuandoquier que te sientas solo, llámame.
12. Conditional sentences beginning with "if". (Imperfect subjunctive only) e.g. Si fuera rico, viajaría por el mundo.
13. Usted(es) commands
14. Negative commands
15. After "quizá(s)", "tal vez", "acaso" (if doubt exists)
16. After "Ojalá" (+ present subjunctive = I hope ...) (+ imperfect subjunctive = If only ...)


The main situations in which the subjunctive is used:

- Wishes
- Emotions
- Impersonal expressions
- Recommendations
- Doubt/Denial
- Ojalá

To use the subjunctive you need **WEIRDO** verbs to introduce it...

**WEIRDO** verbs are always followed by **QUE**...

**Wishes:** quiero/deseo/necesito/ espero que...

**Emotions:** me alegro que... Me da pena que...

**Impersonal/ Improbable:** Es+adjective+que

**Recommendations:** influencing others...

**Doubt:** dudo/ no creo/no me parece cierto que

**Ojalá:** after this Spanish word (means ‘I wish’)
Subjunctive

Read through each cartoon + highlight the examples of the subjunctive. You must then decide why the subjunctive is used. Which of the WEIRDO categories applies?
NO QUIERO QUE SE DERRITA EL HELADO MIENTRAS ME LO COMO.

NO CREO QUE ME HAYA COMIDO Toda LA BOLSA DE COMIDA DE GATOS.

SERA MEJOR QUE ELIMINE UN POCO DE BARRIGA.
Subjunctive

Read through the cartoon + highlight the examples of the subjunctive. You must then decide why the subjunctive is used. Which of the WEIRDO categories applies?

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________
The Subjunctive - Revision Exercises

Hay que completar las siguientes frases:

1. Estoy contento de que nos lo .......... pedido. (Haber)
2. No es seguro que .......... acompañarnos. (Querer)
3. Siento que (vosotros) .......... que iros tan pronto. (tener)
4. Es preciso que nos .......... . (Arrepentir)
5. Prefiero .......... aquí hasta que (él) .......... . (Quedarse - Llegar)
6. Es posible que lo (ella) .......... mañana por la mañana. (Hacer)
7. Me alegro mucho de que (tú) .......... tenido tanta suerte. (Haber)
8. ¿ Quieres que yo te .......... lo que haría ? (Decir)
9. Dudo que .........., aunque el cielo está bastante negro. (Llover)
10. No digo que (él) .......... tan inteligente como tú. (Ser)

Hay que escribir las frases que siguen en castellano:

1. The doctor doesn't want them to go out.
2. If you had written to us sooner, we should have been able to help you.
3. Come when you like - We're always in.
4. It's odd that he has not rung.
5. We are glad that you can come.
6. They asked me to come and see you.
7. He told me to come and see you.
8. It's possible that the train hasn't left yet.
9. If only my brother were here.
10. Stay here until your aunt and uncle arrive.

Hay que completar las frases que siguen:

1. Es probable que Juan .......... esta noche. (Llegar)
2. Es mejor que ustedes .......... a casa. (Volver)
3. Puede que todos .......... esperándonos en el hotel. (Estar)
4. Me han dicho que es posible que yo .......... que quedarme aquí. (Tener)
5. Hace falta que tú .......... a la farmacia. (Ir)
6. Más vale que vosotros .......... ahora. (salir)
7. No es cierto que mis padres lo .......... hecho. (Haber)
8. Mi profesor siempre dice que es preciso que yo .......... mucho. (Trabajar)
9. Creo que es imposible que ellos me .......... visto. (Haber)
10. ¿ Es posible que nosotros .......... llegado a París ? (Haber)