

## Episode 075 – Grammar

### Commands without using the imperative

When you want a person to do something, you use a sentence in the form of a command. Commands can be used to express a request, advice, a warning or instructions. You've already learned all about commands using the formal and informal imperative.

Examples:

Informal: **Pack** die nassen Sachen in die Waschmaschine!

Formal: **Nehmen Sie** sich ein Handtuch.

But there are also various ways of expressing commands without using the imperative.

#### 1. Using the infinitive to express a command

This is often the case in recipes, operating instructions and public announcements.

Examples:

Zuerst die Tür **öffnen**, Wäsche **reinlegen**, die Temperatur **einstellen** und dann die Waschmaschine **anstellen**.

Die Tomaten **schneiden** und mit dem Fleisch in einen Topf **geben**.

Türen bitte **schließen**.

#### 2. Using modal verbs to express commands

"sollen" and "müssen" are modal verbs which also can be used to express instructions, advice and commands.

Examples:

Du **musst** die nassen Klamotten ausziehen.

Du **sollst** die Sachen in die Waschmaschine packen.

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### 3. Declarative sentences

Perfectly normal declarative sentences can also have an imperative character depending on the situation, context and emphasis.

Example:

*Du ziehst jetzt die nassen Sachen aus und packst sie in die Waschmaschine!*

### 4. Interrogative sentences (questions) with the word "können" or in the subjunctive II

Commands can also be in the form of questions. That's much more polite than using the imperative. This usually requires using the subjunctive II or "können".

Examples:

*Anna, **kannst** du mal herkommen? (= Anna, bitte komm mal her.)*

***Könntest** du mir bitte helfen? (= Bitte hilf mir.)*

***Würdest** du mir zeigen, wie die Maschine funktioniert? (= Bitte zeig mir, wie die Maschine funktioniert.)*

### 5. Passive sentences

Some verbs can be used in the passive to express the imperative. This also applies to verbs that otherwise wouldn't be used in the passive because they take no accusative or dative objects. These types of passive sentences are impersonal, so they don't have a subject.

Example:

*Jetzt wird geduscht und danach wird geschlafen!*

### 6. Past participles

Sometimes only the past participle of a verb is used to give strict commands, orders or instructions, for example in the military.

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Examples:

*Aufgepasst!*

*Hingesetzt!*

## 7. Adverbs, adjectives and nouns

Certain individual words and turns of phrase can be used on their own as commands. In most cases, these types of commands are abbreviated, incomplete sentences.

Examples:

*Los, Anna! – (Geh/Fahr) los, Anna!*

*Harry, raus mit der Sprache! – Harry, (rück jetzt) raus mit der Sprache!*

*Leise! – (Sei/Seid/Seien Sie) leise!*

*(zu) Hilfe! – (Komm/Kommt/Kommen Sie mir zu) Hilfe!*