

Summary of Spanish Moods

Spanish has **three moods**, and each one tells you the *purpose* or *attitude* behind the verb — not the time.

Mood = why the speaker is saying it.

Tense = when it happens.

1. Indicative — the mood of reality

Used for **facts, descriptions, events, and things the speaker sees as real or certain.**

Examples:

- *Vivo en Tucson.*
- *Ella trabaja mucho.*
- *Fuimos al mercado.*

This is where most everyday communication lives.

2. Subjunctive — the mood of non-reality

Used when the speaker expresses **wishes, emotions, doubts, possibilities, uncertainty, or things that haven't happened yet.**

Examples:

- *Quiero que vengas.* (wish)
- *Dudo que funcione.* (doubt)
- *Ojalá que llueva.* (hope)

It marks that the action is **not a done deal.**

3. Imperative — the mood of commands

Used to **tell someone what to do.**

Examples:

- *Habla.*
- *Escuchen.*
- *No corran.*

The whole system in one line

Indicative = real.

Subjunctive = not real.

Imperative = do this.

English hides mood inside helper words and tone.

Spanish reveals mood inside the verb itself.

1. Reality vs. Non-Reality (Indicative vs. Subjunctive)

Using **vivir** (to live)

Spanish

- **Ella vive en Madrid.** She lives in Madrid. (Real → indicative)
- **Quiero que ella viva en Madrid.** I want her to live in Madrid. (Not real → subjunctive)

English

- She lives in Madrid.
- I want her to live in Madrid.

Contrast: English uses “live” for both. Spanish marks the difference with **vive** → **viva**.

2. Statements vs. Commands (Indicative vs. Imperative)

Using **cerrar** (to close)

Spanish

- **Cierras la puerta.** You close the door. (Indicative)
- **Cierra la puerta.** Close the door. (Imperative)

English

- You close the door.
- Close the door.

Contrast: English relies on tone. Spanish uses a **different mood**.

3. Desire, Emotion, Doubt (Subjunctive vs. English Workarounds)

Using **estudiar** (to study)

Spanish

- **Espero que estudies.** I hope you study. (Subjunctive)
- **Dudo que estudie.** I doubt he studies. (Subjunctive)
- **Me alegra que estudies.** I'm glad you study. (Subjunctive)

English

- I hope you study.
- I doubt he studies.
- I'm glad you study.

Contrast: English uses meaning words (hope, doubt, glad).
Spanish uses **subjunctive endings**.

4. Future Uncertainty (Subjunctive vs. Plain English)

Using **llegar** (to arrive)

Spanish

- **Cuando llegues, avísame.** When you arrive, let me know.
(Arrival hasn't happened → subjunctive)

English

- When you arrive, let me know.

Contrast: Spanish marks "not yet." English does not.

5. Softening & Courtesy (Subjunctive / Conditional vs. Modals)

Using **tener** (to have)

Spanish

- **Quisiera que tuvieras tiempo.** I would like you to have time.
- **Es posible que él tenga razón.** It's possible he may be right.

English

- I would like you to have time.
- It's possible he may be right.

Contrast: English uses **would, may, might**. Spanish uses **subjunctive**.