

**SAMPLE 43:**  
**Command Performance**  
*Los mandatos directos e indirectos*  
**Direct and Indirect Commands**



In the English language, when we affirmatively command someone to do something, we simply use the main verb, as in “Go”, “Leave!”, or “Be quiet.”  
 If we wish to negate our command, we simply put *do not* or *don’t* before the main verb as in “Don’t go”, “Do not leave”, or “Don’t be quiet”, etc.

In Spanish, however, the plot thickens somewhat. To begin with, Spanish has a *familiar you (tú)* and a *formal you (usted)* while English does not. Secondly, our three (3) classifications of Spanish infinitives –**AR**, –**ER**, and –**IR** in most cases make some inverse switches. With the *usted, ustedes*, and *nosotros* forms (luckily for us) the affirmative *and* negative commands (both *direct* and *indirect*) share the same pattern; that is, **they switch their dominant letter**.

**EXAMPLES: Señor Sánchez, no coma el cereal ahora, cómalo después. (Ud.)**  
 Mr. Sanchez, *don’t eat* your cereal now, *eat* it later. *comer*

**Hablen conmigo después de la clase. (ustedes)**  
 (You all) *Speak* with me after class. *hablar*

**Escribamos una tarea magnífica esta noche.**  
*Let’s write* a magnificent homework assignment tonight. *escribir*

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**DIRECT COMMANDS/Los mandatos directos:**

**Ex:** *Go to the airport.*

**USTED:** (*formal* direct address)

Affirmative Command:

(*Negative Command*):

*vowel switch*

**-AR** > **-e** (*No*) Baile con ella. (*Don't*) Dance with her. *bailar*

**-ER/-IR** > **-a** (*No*) Coma el cereal. (*Don't*) Eat the cereal. *comer*

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**USTEDES:** (*multiple person* direct address)

For the *ustedes* form, maintain the *vowel switch* but add the final **-N:**

*vowel switch*

**-AR** > **-en**

**-ER/-IR** > **-an**

(*No*) Trabaj**en** hoy. (*Don't*) Work today. *trabajar*

(*No*) Escrib**an** la carta. (*Don't*) Write the letter. *escribir*

This is the *final -n* of *plurality* or *multiplicity*.

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**NOSOTROS:** (*collective* direct address, including myself)

Now for the *nosotros* form, maintain the *vowel switch* but add the final **-MOS:**

*vowel switch*

**-AR** > **-emos**

**-ER/-IR** > **-amos**

(*No*) Estudi**emos** la lección. (*Let's not*) Let's study the lesson. *estudiar*

(*No*) Sub**amos** al autobús. (*Let's not*) Let's get on the bus. *subir*

This is the *final -mos* of *collectivity*, which always includes the speaker "I", *yo*.

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**TÚ:** (*informal* direct address) Simply *drop the final -s off of the Simple Present* conjugation of *tú* (i.e., lees > *lee*, trabajas > *trabaja*, piensas > *piensa*, etc.) **for the Affirmative Direct command only!**

**\*\*AFFIRMATIVE DIRECT COMMANDS WITH TÚ\*\***

<b>-AR</b>	>	<b>-a</b>	Baila con ella.	<i>Dance</i> with her.
<b>-ER/-IR</b>	>	<b>-e</b>	Come el cereal.	<i>Eat</i> the cereal.

**NOTE:** *No vowel switch* is in place here. Also, the –s is removed with the *tú* form.

Here are some irregular *tú* Affirmative Direct commands:

<b>venir</b> <i>to come</i>	<b>ven</b>	<b>poner</b> <i>to put</i>	<b>pon</b>
<b>salir</b> <i>to leave</i>	<b>sal</b>	<b>decir</b> <i>to say/totell</i>	<b>di</b>
<b>ir</b> <i>to go</i>	<b>ve</b>	<b>tener</b> <i>to have</i>	<b>ten</b>
<b>ser</b> <i>to be</i>	<b>sé</b>	<b>hacer</b> <i>to do,to make</i>	<b>haz</b>

*Ven* conmigo.

*Come* with me.

*Sal* de la clase.

*Leave* the class.

Toma el cuaderno y *ponlo* en la mesa.

Take the notebook and *put* it on the table.

**\*\*NEGATIVE DIRECT COMMANDS WITH TÚ\*\***

*Vowel switch* (with the final –s added).

<b>-AR</b>	>	<b>-es</b>	No bailes con ella.	<i>Don't</i> dance with her.
<b>-ER/-IR</b>	>	<b>-as</b>	No comas el cereal.	<i>Do not</i> eat the cereal.

This Negative Direct (*tú*) command is like using the *usted* form with an –s tacked on.

**Introduction to Indirect Commands:** Excluding the *tú* form of Affirmative Direct commands as noted above in this sample chapter, in order to create Indirect Commands, simply place a **QUE** (*that/have*) before all of the other persons: *yo, tú, usted, él, ella, nosotros, ustedes,* and *ellos*. Then, make that *vowel switch* across the board.

**QUE** = *that* or *have* (somebody do something)

Audrey prefiere *que* tú lo hagas.

Audrey prefers *that* you do it.

El sacerdote exige *que* él asista a misa.

The priest demands *that* he attend mass.

Espero *que* llegue pronto la tranvía.

I hope *that* the trolley arrive(s) soon.

Insistimos en *que* no fumes en la iglesia.

We insist *that* you not smoke in the church.

*Que* busquen las cuevas en el mapa.

*Have* them look for the caves on the map.

## INDIRECT COMMANDS/*Los mandatos indirectos*

**Ex:** *I prefer that you go to the airport.*

*Indirect commands* always require verbs of *suasion, persuasion, and dissuasion*, generally encompassing *two or three parties*, requiring the Spanish Present (or Past) Subjunctive structures:

Rena *prefers* that I *leave*; Loretta *wanted* me *to cook*, etc.

**DIRECT COMMAND:** John, *open* your book and *close* it.

**INDIRECT COMMAND:** John, I beg you *to open* your book and *to close* it.

Fortunately, all persons (*usted, ustedes, nosotros*, including *tú*) make full use of that *vowel switch*, in both the Affirmative and Negative **Indirect Commands**.

In other words, that troublesome *tú* form of the verb performs that previously mentioned *vowel switch* in *both* the Affirmative and Negative commands *with Indirect Commands*, along with all the other persons. So I repeat: the *yo, tú, él, ella, usted, ustedes, ellos, ellas*, and the *nosotros* verb forms *all* follow the same pattern in *both* the Affirmative and Negative commands **with indirect commands** using **QUE** (*that/have*). This means that all verbs make that *vowel switch* in Spanish with regular consistency.

So only the *tú* form takes some thinking at this point, mainly with the *Affirmative Direct command* or the “do this” and “do that” form: *toma* (take), *come* (eat), *escribe* (write), etc. as opposed to its negations: *no tomes, no comas, and no escribas* (which do make that *vowel switch*).

Mamá *quiere que usted* baile con ella.

Mamá *quiere que tú* bailes con ella.

Mom *wants you to dance* with her.

Adrián *insiste en que usted* coma la cena.

Adrián *insiste en que tú* comas la cena.

Adrian *insists that you eat* dinner.

*Ruego que me escuchen.*

*I beg them to listen* to me.

Jeanine *espera que te duermas tú.*

Jeanine *expects you to fall asleep.*

*Queremos que salgas* inmediatamente.

*We want you to leave* immediately.

*Sugiero que bajemos* por las escaleras.

*I suggest that we go down* the stairs.

Ricardo *manda que no trabajes* hoy.

Richard *commands that you not work* today.

