

**STEP BY STEP**

**B1**

# **SUBJUNCTIVE CLAUSE**



# What is the Present Subjunctive Spanish?

Before we go any further, let's make sure that you fully understand what the subjunctive mood is.

The **subjunctive** one of the three moods that we use in Spanish (along with Indicative and Imperative) and is used when the speaker wants to express a lack of certainty in a statement.

The present subjunctive mood is normally used when speaking about a thought, belief, expectation or assumption – and despite the name, this form can be used to speak about a future action (as well as a present action).

For example:

□ I hope you are fine – Espero que **estés** bien (present)

□ We will congratulate the runner who arrives first – Felicitaremos al corredor que **llegue** primero (future)

Both of the above examples are in the present subjunctive.

In the rest of this post, we are going to help you fully understand what is often recognized as the most difficult part of Spanish grammar.

And to help you master the subjunctive, we need to take a slight detour.

We're going to explore how independent and subordinate clauses work.

Let's start with some definitions.

1) A **clause** is a group of words with a subject and verb. The subject tells us whom or what the sentence is about, and the verbs tell us what the subject is or does.

2) An **independent clause** is a group of words with a subject and verb that can stand on its own, and doesn't need any other extra information to make sense.

Below are examples of the present subjunctive being triggered by relative pronouns.

□ **Que** (That): I hope you have time – Espero **que** tengas tiempo

□ **Cuando** (When): I will come **when** I have time – Vendré **cuando** tenga tiempo

□ **Quien** (Who): It will be done by whoever has time enough – Lo hará **quien** tenga tiempo suficiente

□ **Cuanto** (How much/many): I don't know **how much** time I have – No sé **cuanto** tiempo tenga

As mentioned before, these relative pronouns, when used in certain expressions or with certain verbs, can trigger the subjunctive mood in subordinate clauses.

### 1. To express wishes:

- I wish that you come to my party – Deseo que **vengan** a mi fiesta
- We wish that you come to our wedding – Deseamos que **vengas** a nuestra boda
- I wish you have a good day – Deseo que **tengas** un buen día
- I hope that you enjoy the cake – Espero que te **disfrutes** la torta
- We demand that we get paid now – Exigimos que nos **paguen** ya
- I prefer that you travel alone – Prefiero que **viajes** solo
- Do you need me to help you? – Necesitas que te **ayude**?
- I request you to be more kind – Pido que **sean** más amables
- Hopefully it won't rain today – Ojalá no **llueva** hoy
- I want you to study Spanish – Quiero que **estudies** español

### 2. To express doubts:

- I doubt that you come to my party – Dudo que **vengan** a mi fiesta
  - I'm not sure that it is the best idea – No estoy seguro de que **sea** la mejor idea
  - It doesn't seem like you're very happy – No parece que **estés** muy contento
- Or words that express uncertainty:

- I may like that movie – Tal vez me **guste** esa película
- We may live in Barcelona for a while – Quizás **vivamos** un tiempo en Barcelona

### 3. To express emotions and feelings:

- I love that you have so many friends – Me encanta que **tengas** tantos amigos
  - It surprises me that you are home early – Me sorprende que **estés** temprano en casa
  - I'm sorry you have to work – Lamento que **tengas** que trabajar
  - It makes me happy that you sing in Spanish – Me alegra que **cantes** en Español
- Overtime, you'll notice that certain situations almost always trigger the subjunctive:
- It makes me happy that you're here – Me hace feliz que **estés** aquí
  - It makes me sad that you don't have time for me – Me entristece que no **tengas** tiempo para mí

### 4. To express hope:

- I hope it won't rain – Ojalá no **llueva**

□ I hope you're happy – Espero que **estés** feliz

#### 5. To express purpose:

□ He works for his children to study – Él trabaja para que sus hijos **estudien**

□ The money is for you to buy lunch – El dinero es para que **compren** el almuerzo

#### 6. Negative form of the imperative:

□ Do not smoke – No **fume**

□ Do not come too late – No **vengas** muy tarde

#### Present Subjunctive Spanish Conjugation

Once you know how to conjugate the [simple present](#), the following conjugation is relatively straightforward.

In fact, we're going to compare the simple present tense in the indicative mood vs. the subjunctive mood side by side, so that you can see similar they are.

For -AR verbs, the vowel in last syllable of the regular indicative conjugation will change from "a" to an "e", or "o" to "e" for the personal pronoun "yo".

| Personal Pronoun | Indicative<br>Comprar (to buy) | Subjunctive<br>Comprar (to buy) |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Yo               | Compro                         | Compre                          |
| Tú               | Compras                        | Compres                         |
| Él / Ella        | Compra                         | Compre                          |
| Nosotros         | Compramos                      | Compremos                       |
| Ustedes          | Compran                        | Compren                         |

|               |         |         |
|---------------|---------|---------|
| Ellos / Ellos | Compran | Compren |
|---------------|---------|---------|

We must follow a similar formula when dealing with the regular verbs ending in -ER and -IR.

The vowel “e” will change to an “a” in the last syllable of the regular indicative conjugation and “o” into “a” for personal pronoun “yo”.

| Personal Pronoun | Indicative<br>Comer (to eat) | Subjunctive<br>Comer (to eat) |
|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yo               | Como                         | Coma                          |
| Tú               | Comes                        | Comas                         |
| Él / Ella        | Come                         | Coma                          |
| Nosotros         | Comemos                      | Comamos                       |
| Ustedes          | Comen                        | Coman                         |
| Ellos / Ellos    | Comen                        | Coman                         |

Here are a couple more examples of regular verbs conjugated in the present subjunctive mood.

*(Remember, the present subjunctive doesn't exist in English, which is why some translations look strange.)*

| Personal Pronoun | Infinitive Verb | Subjunctive | Examples |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|----------|
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|----------|

|               |                    |                |                                                                                                         |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yo            | Hablar (To speak)  | <b>Hable</b>   | Ella espera que hable en la conferencia.<br>She expects that I speak in the conference.                 |
| Tú            | Comer (To eat)     | <b>Comas</b>   | Mamá quiere que comas toda la cena.<br>Mom wants that you eat all the dinner.                           |
| Él / ella     | Vivir (To live)    | <b>Viva</b>    | Dudo que ella viva mucho tiempo en esta ciudad.<br>I doubt that she lives for a long time in this city. |
| Nosotros      | Creer (To believe) | <b>Creamos</b> | No es posible que creamos en sus palabras.<br>It's not possible that we believe his words.              |
| Ustedes       | Beber (To drink)   | <b>Beban</b>   | Espero que no beban mucho esta noche.<br>I hope that they don't drink too much tonight.                 |
| Ellos / Ellas | Comprar (To buy)   | <b>Compren</b> | Queremos que compren mucha comida.<br>We want that you buy a lot of food.                               |

### Present Subjunctive Spanish Irregulars

Of course, there are irregular verbs that need to be conjugated differently.

Below are some of the most common irregular verbs and their conjugations in the present subjunctive mood.

| Personal Pronoun | Ser | Estar | Decir | Tener | Venir |
|------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                  |     |       |       |       |       |

| Irregular stem | Se-    | Est-    | Dig-    | Teng-    | Veng-    |
|----------------|--------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| Yo             | Sea    | Esté    | Diga    | Tenga    | Venga    |
| Tú             | Seas   | Estés   | Digas   | Tengas   | Vengas   |
| Él / ella      | Sea    | Esté    | Diga    | Tenga    | Venga    |
| Nosotros       | Seamos | Estemos | Digamos | Tengamos | Vengamos |
| Ustedes        | Sean   | Estén   | Digan   | Tengan   | Vengan   |
| Ellos / Ellas  | Sean   | Estén   | Digan   | Tengan   | Vengan   |

### Voicing Your Opinion: Subjunctive vs. Imperative

Before we finish, it's important to mention that when we want to give our opinion about what we think, we can use the indicative or subjunctive, depending on whether the sentence is affirmative or negative.

For example:

□ I think that she is good person – Pienso que ella **es** una buena persona (indicative).

□ I don't think that she is good person – No pienso que ella **sea** una buena persona (subjunctive).

A good hack to remember is that phrases such as “Me parece que...”, “Creo que...”, “Pienso que...”, will be linked to a subordinate clause that will be in indicative when affirmative, and in subjunctive when negative.

### Present Subjunctive Spanish Practice

### Conjugate the relevant verb in the present subjunctive.

1. **Tener:** Estoy buscando un apartamento que \_\_\_\_\_ una terraza. (I'm looking for an apartment that has a terrace.)
2. **Saber:** Ella quiere una secretaria que \_\_\_\_\_ hablar español. (She wants a secretary who knows how to speak Spanish)
3. **Llegar:** Necesito que \_\_\_\_\_ a tiempo a la reunión. (I need you to get to the meeting on time)
4. **Tomar:** Queremos que los niños \_\_\_\_\_ clases de guitarra. (We want children to take guitar lessons)
5. **Disfrutar:** Esperamos que \_\_\_\_\_ su estadía en el hotel. (We hope you enjoy your stay at the hotel)
6. **Poder:** Ojalá mañana \_\_\_\_\_ ir a la playa. (Hopefully tomorrow we can go to the beach)
7. **Ir:** Voy a solicitar una beca cuando \_\_\_\_\_ a la universidad. (I'm going to apply for a scholarship when I go to college)
8. **Comprar:** Por favor, \_\_\_\_\_ vegetales. (Please, buy vegetables.)
9. **Creer:** Es increíble que todavía \_\_\_\_\_ sus mentiras. (It's amazing that you still believe his lies)
10. **Tener:** Cuando \_\_\_\_\_ tiempo, ayúdame a limpiar el garaje. (When you have time, help me to clean the garage)

### ANSWERS

1. Estoy buscando un apartamento que **tenga** una terraza.
2. Ella quiere una secretaria que **sepa** hablar español.
3. Necesito que **llegues** a tiempo a la reunión.
4. Queremos que los niños **tomen** clases de guitarra.
5. Esperamos que **disfruten** su estadía en el hotel.
6. Ojalá mañana **podamos** ir a la playa.
7. Voy a solicitar una beca cuando **vaya** a la universidad.
8. Por favor, **compren** vegetales.
9. Es increíble que todavía **creas** sus mentiras.
10. Cuando **tengas** tiempo, ayúdame a limpiar el garaje.