***THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD***

The subjunctive is not a tense, it’s a mood. Within the subjunctive mood there are 2 tenses: the present subjunctive and the past subjunctive. The present subjunctive is used when talking about the present or the future, and past subjunctive is used when talking about the past. Don’t worry about the past subjunctive until you master the present first.

In order to form the subjunctive mood, you simply need the formal command (“yo” form of the verb, drop the “o”, then add the opposite vowel). Hable is the subjunctive verb for “I speak” or “he, she or you (formal) speak. Since it means both of these forms, the subject pronoun “yo” or “él”, “ella” or “ud.” must be used for clarification. For the “tú” form, simply add an “s” (hables); the nosotros form, add “mos” (hablemos), and for the ellos, ellas, uds. form, add “n” (hablen).

There are 5 exceptions to the “yo” form rule: ser becomes sea, saber becomes sepa, ir becomes vaya, estar becomes esté and dar becomes dé. This is the case because these 5 verbs end with a letter other than “o”.

A very important rule that must be followed in the subjunctive mood is that there MUST be two separate subjects in the sentence. The subjunctive is used when I hope that someone else does something (Espero que mi hermano me ayude), but it is NOT used when I hope that I do something. In English, we say that I hope that I go to a good college. Because “I” is the subject of both clauses in this sentence, the second verb will stay in the infinitive (Espero ir a una buena universidad).

The subjunctive is used in Spanish when uncertainty, emotion and several other conditions arise. The acronym UWEIRDO is an easy way of remembering these conditions. UWEIRDO stands for:

U- uncertainty

W- wish, want, desire

E- emotion

I- Indirect command (Que…) or Impersonal expression

1. Request

D- Doubt

O- Order

**The U of UWEIRDO stands for Uncertainty**:

Verbs like It’s not certain (no es cierto que), It’s not clear (no es claro que), I’m not sure (no estoy seguro que), It’s probable (es probable que), It’s possible that (Es posible que), etc. There are many more verbs that fit in this category. You’ll learn them as you see and use them.

Here’s an example of uncertainty with the subjunctive:

No es seguro que vayamos de vacaciones el próximo mes (It’s not certain that we’ll go on vaction next month).

NOTE: If I take the “No” out of this sentence, the subjunctive is NOT used, because certainty is implied…Es seguro que vamos (or iremos) de vacaciones el próximo mes (It’s certain that we’ll go on vacation next month. The present indicative tense is used because you’re stating a fact, not stating an uncertainty.

Wish, want, desire:

Verbs like Espero que, Deseo que, Quiero que, Ojalá que express wish, want or desire. The subjunctive is always used with these verbs.

Espero que tu equipo gane is an example of the subjunctive used with wish, want or desire.

**The E of UWEIRDO stands for Emotion:**

Verbs like I’m happy that (Me alegro de que) and It’s sad that (Es triste que) use the subjunctive (there are many more).

“Me alegro de que tú estés aquí” (I’m happy that you’re here) is an example of the subjunctive with emotion.

**The “I” of UWEIRDO has two uses.**

**The first is indirect command**. The song “A Dios Le Pido”, sung by Juanes, illustrates perfectly the use of indirect command. He starts many of his lines with the word “Que”, which means “that”. The first line reads “Que mis ojos se despierten con la luz de tu Mirada”, which translates to “That my eyes will/would awaken to the light of your glance/face”. Because he doesn’t know if this will be the case, the subjunctive is used. So, “Que…” is expressing a desire without using a verb before it. Juanes could have used “Ojalá” before the “que” and the sentence would have meant the same thing. “Ojalá que mis ojos se despierten con la luz de tu Mirada” has the same meaning.

A common wish for someone in the Spanish world is “Que te vaya bien”, which means “That is goes well for you”.

**The second part of the “I” in UWEIRDO stands for Impersonal Expression**. There are dozens of these in Spanish. Here is a partial list of common impersonal expressions:

**es aconsejable que ...**  
it's advisable that ...

**es bueno que ...**  
it's good that ...

**es difícil que ...**  
it's unlikely that ...

**es dudoso que ...**  
it is doubtful that ...

**es fácil que ...**  
it's likely that ...

**es fantástico que ...**  
it's fantastic that ...

**es importante que ...**  
it's important that ...

**es imposible que ...**  
it's impossible that ...

**es improbable que ...**  
it's unlikely that ...

**es incierto que ...**  
it's uncertain that ...

**es increíble que ...**  
it's incredible that ...

**es (una) lástima que ...**  
it's a pity that ...

**es malo que ...**  
it's bad that ...

**es mejor que ...**  
it's better that ...

**es necesario que ...**  
it's necessary that ...

**es posible que ...**  
it's possible that ...

**es preciso que ...**  
it's necessary that ...

**es preferible que ...**  
it's preferable that ...

**es raro que ...**  
it's rare that ...

**es ridículo que ...**  
it's ridiculous that ...

**es terrible que ...**  
it's terrible that ...

**hasta que ...**  
until ...

So, the sentence “Es ridículo que Los Browns pierdan todos los partidos” uses the subjunctive because it contains an impersonal expression.

NOTE: Just because there is a “que” in the sentence, it doesn’t mean that the subjunctive must be used. Here is a list of expressions that use “que” that will never take the sujunctive:

**creer que ...**  
to believe that ...

**no dudar que ...**  
to not doubt that ...

**es cierto que ...**  
it is certain that ...

**es claro que ...**  
it is clear that ...

**es evidente que ...**  
it is certain that ...

**es obvio que ...**  
it is obvious that ...

**estar seguro que ...**  
to be sure that ...

**es verdad que ...**  
it is true that ...

**no cabe duda que ...**  
there's no doubt that ...

**no es dudoso que ...**  
it is not doubtful that ...

**no hay duda que ...**  
there is no doubt that ...

The subjunctive is not used with these expressions because they are stating facts, not conditions that express some sort of uncertainty, emotion, wish or doubt.

“Es verdad que Los Browns son malos” means “It’s true that the Browns are bad”. We are stating a fact here (as sad one), so we use the present indicative instead of the present subjunctive.

**The R of UWEIRDO is request**:

Verbs that imply request are I request or I ask for (Pido que) and I beg (Suplico or Ruego que). There are many more, but these are two examples.

“Pido que uds. hagan la tarea.” Means “I ask that you do Your homework”. I don’t know if you’re going to do the homework, so this sentence uses the subjunctive.

**The D of UWEIRDO stands for DOUBT**

The verb dudar- to doubt is the main verb in this category.

“Dudo que Los Browns ganen muchos partidos” means “I doubt the Browns Will win many games.   
NOTE: Just because a sentence contains the word “will”, it doesn’t mean that the future tense will be used. “Los Browns ganarán muchos partidos” is a sentence that uses the future because there is no UWEIRDO setup in this sentence. When you add “Dudo que”, you are setting up the subjunctive with doubt.

**Finally, we have arrived at the O part of UWEIRDO, which stands for “Order”.**

The verb “Mandar”, to order (the verb demander means the same thing” implies order. When you are ordered to do something, you have a choice. Therefore, it’s not certain that it will happen.   
In the sentence “Mando que los Browns ganen muchos partidos” (I order the Browns to win many games), there is uncertainty implied, so the subjunctive is used.

Another common use of the subjunctive is when the word “Cuando” is used in the future. “Cuando salgas de la clase, apaga la luz por favor” means “When you leave class, please turn the light off” uses the subjunctive because cuando was used in the future (expressing the possibility of the light being turned off, but not a certainty.

Other words that use the subjunctive with the future are Antes de que (before), Después de que (after), En Cuanto (As soon as), Para que (in order that)…there are many more…as you see them, please add them in the space below:

When conjugating “shoe verbs” in the subjunctive, make sure to not make the stenm change the “nosotros” form. The verb “cerrar” is conjugated like this:

Cierre **cerremos** vuelva **volvamos**

Cierres cerréis vuelvas volváis

Cierre cierren vuelva vuelvan

There are 9 shoe verbs that keep the stem change. The sentence “I need to RSVP to Sally in Maryland Pretty Soon” will help us to remember these 9 verbs.

R (repetir)

S (servir)

V (vestir)

P (pedir)

S (seguir)

M (morir)

D (dormir)

P (preferir)

S (sentir)

These 9 verbs will have irregular forms throughout the conjugation of the sunjunctive mood. So, the verb dormer is conjugated as follows:

Duerma **durmamos**

Duermas durmáis

Duerma duerman

The nosotros form of the other versbs are as follows:

Repetir- repitamos

Servir - sirvamos

Vestir- vistamos

Pedir- Pidamos

Seguir- Sigamos

Morir- Muramos

Dormir- Durmamos

Preferir- prefiramos

Sentir- Sintamos

There you have it…a basic introduction to the subjunctive mood. The only way to truly learn this is by practicing a lot. The subjunctive is VERY common in Spanish, as you’ll see as we read short stories and listen to various sources.

Feel free to stop by in the morning to ask me any questions or to speak with me…even 5 or 10 minutes can be very helpful.

Sr. Turk