

The Subjunctive Form – Part I

Goal: In the 1st part of this chapter on the French subjunctive form, you will learn how to conjugate the ER verbs (1st group) in the subjunctive. In a subsequent lesson, we will learn some useful expressions where we can employ these ER verbs in the subjunctive.

First, a brief description of the subjunctive...

Definition

The subjunctive is a verb mood (NOT a verb tense) you can use to express wishes, doubts, possibility, necessity, commands, judgments, emotions or to express something that cannot be taken for a fact at present. Usually, the subjunctive will be used in dependent clauses. (Feel free to [send me an email](#) if you need more explanations about dependent clauses). The subjunctive mood can also be referred to as the conjunctive mood. Here are a few sentences in French where the subjunctive mood is used with ER verbs.

- A- Je voudrais que tu déjeunes avec moi. (*I would like you to have lunch with me*) [wish]
 B- Elle veut que vous chantiez avec nous. (*She wants you to sing with us*) [command]
 C- Il est important que nous travaillions bien en classe. (*It is important that we work well in class*). [necessity]

The verbs déjeunes, chantiez, and travaillions are here used in the subjunctive form. They are also part of a dependent clause (a dependent clause in French will be often preceded by the relative pronoun QUE (*that*). This relative pronoun QUE is seen more clearly in the example C, where it is translated by THAT.

Now, how do we conjugate verbs of the 1st group (ER) in the subjunctive form?

It's very easy, indeed.

Quick tip: The endings of the subjunctive form for the verbs of the 1st group are **not so different** from the conjugation of these same verbs in the simple present. There will be some modifications for verbs employed with the subject pronouns NOUS and VOUS. Apart from it, they're all the same. Let's take the verb DANSER to demonstrate our argument.

Simple Present (danser)-to dance	Subjunctive Form (danser)-to dance
Je dans E	(que) je dans E
Tu dans ES	(que) tu dans ES
Il/Elle dans E	(qu') il/elle dans E
Nous dans ONS	(que) nous dans IONS
Vous dans EZ	(que) vous dans IEZ
Ils/Elles dans ENT	(qu') ils/elles dans ENT

Quick tip: As you can see from this table, the only change brought to the subjunctive form is the the "I" added to dansONS and dansEZ in the simple present, which now become dans(i)ons and dans(i)ez.

Now, the thing to do is to practice what we've learned. Here is [an interesting exercise](#) where you can learn how to conjugate verbs of the 1st group in the subjunctive mood all by yourself. Please submit your answers in the [forum](#), and we will review them together. Bonne chance! Merci!

Herman