POINTS CLÉS

Réagir et recommander

To help you express your reactions, recommendations, and requests in French, this section will review some important tools, including (1) formation of the present subjunctive, (2) contexts for using the subjunctive, (3) conjunctions that require the subjunctive, (4) formation and use of the past subjunctive, and (5) imperative mood (commands).

1. Present subjunctive
   1.1 Regular forms
   1.2 Irregular forms

2. Using the subjunctive
   2.1 Necessity and obligation
   2.2 Doubt and uncertainty
   2.3 Will and desire
   2.4 Emotion
   2.5 Opinion

3. Conjunctions that require the subjunctive

4. Past subjunctive
   4.1 Formation of the past subjunctive
   4.2 Using the past subjunctive

5. Imperative mood (Commands)
   5.1 Regular forms
   5.2 Irregular forms
   5.3 Imperatives with y and en
   5.4 Pronominal verbs
   5.5 Imperatives expressing a wish

1. Present subjunctive

The subjunctive is one of four moods used to categorize verbs in French (indicative, imperative, subjunctive, and conditional). You are already familiar with the indicative mood used to express information as factual or objective. In contrast, the subjunctive mood is used to express a speaker's subjectivity, that is, his or her wishes, hopes, doubts, emotions, and personal opinions. The subjunctive mood is typically found in dependent clauses introduced by que. Note that in the following example, the element of subjectivity expressed in the main clause (Sandra's fear) triggers the use of the subjunctive mood in the dependent clause. Notice too that the subject in the main clause (Sandra) is different from the subject in the dependent clause (her mother).

Sandra a peur que sa mère ne comprenne pas ses choix.  Sandra fears that her mother might not understand her choices.
1.1 Regular forms
-er, -ir, and -re verbs

The subjunctive endings are the same for all verbs: -e, -es, -e, -ions, -iez, -ent. For most verbs, the subjunctive mood is formed by dropping the -ent ending from the third-person plural of the present indicative and adding the subjunctive endings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARLER (to speak)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...que je parle</td>
<td>...que nous parlions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...que tu parles</td>
<td>...que vous parliez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...qu'il/elle/on parle</td>
<td>...qu'ils/elles parlent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the similarities between the present indicative and the present subjunctive of -er verbs. The endings are identical except for the nous and vous forms. Because the subjunctive occurs in dependent clauses (also known as subordinate clauses), the subordinating conjunction que is usually included as part of the paradigm for the subjunctive forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINIR (to finish)</th>
<th>ATTENDRE (to wait for)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...que je finisse</td>
<td>...que nous finissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...que tu finisses</td>
<td>...que vous finissiez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...qu'il/elle/on finisse</td>
<td>...qu'ils/elles finissent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...que j'attende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...que nous attendions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...que tu attendes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...que vous attendiez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...qu'il/elle/on attende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...qu'ils/elles attendent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the singular forms of -re and -ir verbs, the subjunctive looks and sounds different from the present indicative since the stem is different for the two moods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENT INDICATIVE</th>
<th>PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>je finis</td>
<td>...que je finisse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j'attends</td>
<td>...que j'attende</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note that, for all conjugations, the third-person plural of the present subjunctive always looks and sounds like the present indicative since the stem for the subjunctive comes from the third-person plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENT INDICATIVE</th>
<th>PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ils/elles parlent</td>
<td>...qu'ils/elles parlent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ils/elles finissent</td>
<td>...qu'ils/elles finissent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ils/elles attendent</td>
<td>...qu'ils/elles attendent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irregular verbs with regular subjunctive forms

Many verbs considered irregular in the present indicative nevertheless follow the rules for regular subjunctive formation. In other words, the subjunctive stem is formed by removing the -ent ending from the third-person plural of the present indicative and then by adding the endings -e, -es, -e, -ions, -iez, -ent. Here are some irregular verbs with their subjunctive forms.

- **connaitre** to know ...que je connaisse ...qu'ils/elles connaissent
- **dire** to say ...que je dise ...qu'ils/elles disent
- **dormir** to sleep ...que je dorme ...qu'ils/elles dorment
- **écrire** to write ...que j'écrive ...qu'ils/elles écrivent
- **lire** to read ...que je lise ...qu'ils/elles lisent
- **mettre** to put ...que je mette ...qu'ils/elles mettent
- **partir** to leave ...que je parte ...qu'ils/elles partent
- **sortir** to go out ...que je sorte ...qu'ils/elles sortent
- **sourire** to smile ...que je sourie ...qu'ils/elles sourient

Stem-changing verbs

Verbs with stem changes in the present indicative have one stem for the subjunctive of the nous and vous forms and another stem for the “boot” forms. These verbs, which include acheter, appeler, commencer, and manger, have the same two stem changes in the present subjunctive as in the indicative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACHETER (to buy)</th>
<th>APPELER (to call)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>que j'achète</td>
<td>...que nous achetions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>que tu achètes</td>
<td>...que tu appelles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qu'elle achète</td>
<td>...qu'il/elle appelle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| qu'achètent      | ...que nous appelions |
| qu'elles achètent | ...que vous appeliez |

1.2 Irregular forms

Verbs with two stems

Verbs such as venir, with two stems in the present indicative, have a similar two-stem irregularity in the present subjunctive.

The third-person plural of the present indicative (ils viennent) provides the subjunctive stem for the “boot” forms je, tu, il/elle/on, and ils/elles. The first-person
plural of the present indicative (nous venons) provides the second stem for the nous and vous forms of the subjunctive. The regular subjunctive endings are added to these two stems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENT INDICATIVE</th>
<th>PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VENIR (to come)</strong></td>
<td><strong>VENIR</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>je viens</td>
<td>...que je vienne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nous venons</td>
<td>...que nous venions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu viens</td>
<td>...que tu viennes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vous venez</td>
<td>...que vous veniez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on vient</td>
<td>...qu’il/elle/on vienne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ils/elles viennent</td>
<td>...qu’ils/elles viennent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to venir, here is a list of the most frequent verbs with two stems in the subjunctive:

- **boire** to drink
  - ...que je boive
  - ...que nous buvions
- **croire** to believe
  - ...que je croie
  - ...que nous croyions
- **devoir** to have to
  - ...que je doive
  - ...que nous devions
- **mourir** to die
  - ...que je meure
  - ...que nous mourions
- **prendre** to take
  - ...que je prenne
  - ...que nous prenions
- **recevoir** to receive
  - ...que je recoive
  - ...que nous recevions
- **tenir** to hold
  - ...que je tienne
  - ...que nous tenions
- **voir** to see
  - ...que je voie
  - ...que nous voyions

Some two-stem verbs have highly irregular first stems.

- **aller** to go
  - ...que j’aillle
  - ...que nous allions
- **vouloir** to want
  - ...que je veuille
  - ...que nous voulions

**Avoir** and **être**

These verbs are highly irregular in the subjunctive and must be memorized. Note that the nous and vous forms are spelled with the letter y (instead of the i characteristic of the regular subjunctive endings). Note in particular the pronunciation of the subjunctive forms of **avoir**, which have the same vowel sound as found in j’ai (I have), the first-person singular in the present indicative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVOIR (to have)</th>
<th>ÉTRE (to be)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...que j’aie</td>
<td>...que je suis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...que nous ayons</td>
<td>...que nous soyons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...que tu aies</td>
<td>...que tu sois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...que vous ayez</td>
<td>...que vous soyez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...qu’il/elle/on ait</td>
<td>...qu’il/elle/on soit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...qu’ils/elles aient</td>
<td>...qu’ils/elles soient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Faire, pouvoir, savoir

These verbs have completely irregular stems. The endings, however, are regular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAIRE (to do)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...que je fasse</td>
<td>...que nous fassions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...que tu fasses</td>
<td>...que vous fassiez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...qu'il/elle/on fasse</td>
<td>...qu'ils/elles fassent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFINITIVE</th>
<th>PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pouvoir (to be able)</td>
<td>...que je puisse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>savoir (to know)</td>
<td>...que je sache</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Using the subjunctive

2.1 Necessity and obligation

The subjunctive is required after impersonal expressions of necessity and obligation. An impersonal expression is any expression introduced by the impersonal pronoun il, usually translated into English by *it*. One of the most frequent is *il faut que* (*it is necessary to*). When the main clause uses *il faut que*, the verb of the dependent clause which follows must be in the subjunctive. Note that there are always two different subjects in the two clauses.

SANDRA: *Il faut que tu choisisse*  
le vin, Yann.  

You’ve got to choose  
the wine, Yann.

Note that the expression *il faut que* is stronger and more emphatic than the verb *devoir* (which is followed by an infinitive):

Yann doit choisir le vin.  

Yann must/is supposed to choose the wine.

Here are other common impersonal expressions of obligation and necessity. Note that they are all followed by the conjunction *que* which introduces a dependent clause with a verb in the subjunctive.

Il est essentiel que...  
Il est important que...  
Il est indispensable que...  
Il est inévitable que...  
Il est nécessaire que...  
Il est préférable que...  
Il vaut mieux que...  
Il est essentiel qu'il fasse ses devoirs lui-même.  

It is essential that...  
It is important that...  
It is indispensable that...  
It is unavoidable that...  
It is necessary that...  
It is preferable that...  
It is better that...  
It is essential that he do his homework himself.
2.2 Doubt and uncertainty

The choice of mood indicates the speaker's degree of certainty. The indicative implies the speaker believes or is certain that what is being described is possible or does exist. In contrast, the subjunctive implies the speaker doubts the existence or possibility of what is being described.

Expressions of doubt and uncertainty

The subjunctive occurs in subordinate clauses introduced by verbs and expressions of doubt or uncertainty. Furthermore, there must be two different subjects in the two clauses linked by the subordinating conjunction que.

\begin{align*}
\text{douter que...} & \quad \text{to doubt that . . .} \\
\text{Il est douteux que...} & \quad \text{It is doubtful that . . .} \\
\text{Il est impossible que...} & \quad \text{It is impossible that . . .} \\
\text{Il est incroyable que...} & \quad \text{It is unbelievable that . . .} \\
\text{Il est possible que...} & \quad \text{It is possible that . . .} \\
\text{Il se peut que...} & \quad \text{It is possible that . . .} \\
\text{Il est douteux que tout le monde soit d'accord.} & \quad \text{It is doubtful that everybody agrees.}
\end{align*}

Interrogatives and negatives

Doubt is commonly expressed by questioning or negating a statement.

\begin{align*}
\text{Est-ce que tu crois que ce soit raisonnable?} & \quad \text{Do you believe that it is reasonable?} \\
\text{Est-ce que vous pensez vraiment que la mère de Sandra soit fâchée?} & \quad \text{Do you really think that Sandra's mother is upset?} \\
\text{Je ne crois pas que ce soit une bonne idée.} & \quad \text{I don't believe that it's a good idea.}
\end{align*}

However, the subjunctive is not obligatory in all questions. For instance, when the question is about an event in the future, the indicative future can be used.

\begin{align*}
\text{Est-ce que tu crois que Yann finira ses études?} & \quad \text{Do you believe that Yann will complete his degree?} \\
\text{Est-ce que vous pensez que Sandra retournera en Martinique?} & \quad \text{Do you think that Sandra will go back to Martinique?}
\end{align*}

The following expressions imply certainty, so when they are used in affirmative statements, they are followed by the indicative.

\begin{align*}
\text{avoir l'impression que...} & \quad \text{to have a feeling that . . .} \\
\text{croire que...} & \quad \text{to believe that . . .} \\
\text{se douter que...} & \quad \text{to suspect that . . .} \\
\text{être sûr(e) que...} & \quad \text{to be sure that . . .} \\
\text{penser que...} & \quad \text{to think that . . .} \\
\text{supposer que...} & \quad \text{to suppose that . . .} \\
\text{trouver que...} & \quad \text{to find that . . .}
\end{align*}
Il est certain que...  It is certain that...
Il est clair que...  It is clear that...
Il est évident que...  It is obvious that...
Il est probable que...  It is probable that...
Il est vrai que...  It is true that...
Il paraît que...  It appears that...
Il (me) semble que...  It seems (to me) that...

When these expressions are negated or used to introduce a question, the subjunctive is required. On the other hand, when expressions of doubt are negated, they indicate certainty and thus are followed by the indicative.

Je doute que Yann ait du talent.  I doubt that Yann has talent. = I am not certain that...
Je ne doute pas que Yann a du talent.  I do not doubt that Yann has talent. = I am certain that...

Qui and que

The subjunctive is used in a dependent clause introduced by qui or que (also referred to as a relative clause) whenever the existence of the antecedent (the person or thing referred to in the main clause) is in doubt. In the following example, the subjunctive introduced by qui indicates that the speaker doubts the existence of a doctor able to speak French, Creole, and Chinese.

Je cherche un médecin qui sache parler français, créole et chinois.
I'm looking for a doctor who might know how to speak French, Creole, and Chinese.

In the next example, the speaker has no doubt about the trilingual doctor's existence (presumably because he knows the doctor) and uses the indicative mood to indicate this certainty.

Je cherche un médecin qui sait parler français, créole et chinois.
I'm looking for a doctor who knows how to speak French, Creole, and Chinese.

Superlatives

The use of a superlative can influence the choice between the subjunctive and the indicative. The subjunctive is used after superlative expressions that contain a subjective opinion. However, if the superlative expression contains a fact or a completely objective opinion, the indicative must be used.

Sandra est la plus belle femme que je connaisse.
Sandra is the most beautiful woman I know.
(subjunctive = subjective opinion)

Sandra est la seule Martiniquaise que je connais.
Sandra is the only woman from Martinique I know.
(indicative = fact)
The following list contains a group of common expressions that, like the superlative, can also influence the choice between the subjunctive and the indicative.

le la seul(e) the only le la dernier/-ère the last
l'unique the only le la premier/-ère the first
il n'y a que there is only le la meilleur(e) the best

Ma sœur est la seule personne qui comprend mon frère. My sister is the only person who understands my brother.

2.3 Will and desire

The subjunctive is used in dependent clauses after expressions of will and desire whenever there are two different subjects in the two clauses linked by the subordinating conjunction que. The infinitive is used after a verb expressing will or desire when there is no change of subject.

Sandra veut que sa mère parte. Sandra wants her mother to leave.
(two different subjects = subjunctive)
Sandra veut partir. Sandra wants to leave.
(same subject = infinitive)

Here is a list of common verbs expressing will and desire:

aimer que... to like that...
aimer mieux que... to prefer that...
attendre que... to wait...
désirer que... to desire that...
exiger que... to require that...
préférer que... to prefer that...
souhaiter que... to hope that...
vouloir bien que... to be willing that...
vouloir que... to want that...

Fabienne veut que Yann fasse la cuisine ce soir. Fabienne wants Yann to do the cooking tonight.

Note that espérer (to hope) is an exception and is followed by the indicative.

Fabienne espère que Yann préparera du couscous ce soir. Fabienne hopes that Yann will prepare couscous this evening.

2.4 Emotion

The subjunctive is used in the dependent clause when preceded by an expression of emotion used in the main clause. Remember that the subjunctive requires that a sentence contain two different subjects in the main and dependent clauses. Here is a list of common expressions of emotion:

avoir peur que... to fear that...
crains que... to fear that...
être content(e) que... to be happy that...
être désolé(e) que... to be sorry that...
être étonné(e) que... to be surprised that...
être heureux/-e que... to be happy that...
être impatient(e) que... to be impatient that...
être malheureux/-e que... to be unhappy that...
être mécontent(e) que... to be unhappy that...
être ravi(e) que... to be delighted that...
être surpris(e) que... to be surprised that...
être triste que... to be sad that...
faire plaisir à quelqu’un que... to please someone that...
redouter que... to fear that...
regretter que... to regret that...
se réjouir que... to rejoice, be delighted that...

Cela fait plaisir à Yann que sa sœur lui rend visite.
Sandra est ravie que nous venions dîner chez elle ce soir.

It pleases Yann that his sister will visit him / might visit him / is visiting him.
Sandra is delighted that we are coming to dinner at her house this evening.

Note that there are several ways of translating these sentences. Only the context will determine if the action in the subjunctive refers to the present or the future. There are no future forms of the subjunctive.

2.5 Opinion
here is a list of common impersonal expressions of opinion; there are many more such expressions since any adjective may be used. Remember that impersonal expressions always have il as the subject. These expressions are followed by a dependent clause in the subjunctive.

Il est bon que... It is good that...
Il est dommage que... It is unfortunate that...
Il est juste que... It is fair that...
Il est naturel que... It is natural that...
Il est regrettable que... It is regrettable that...
Il est triste que... It is sad that...
Il est urgent que... It is urgent that...
Il est utile que... It is useful that...
Il vaut mieux que... It is better that...

Il est dommage que mon ami ne puisse pas nous accompagner. It is unfortunate that my friend cannot accompany us.
À votre tour!

A. Check which of the following expressions require the indicative and which require the subjunctive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATIVE</th>
<th>SUBJUNCTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Nous craignons que...</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Elles savent que...</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Elle est certaine que...</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Nous sommes sûrs que...</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Je suis ravi(e) que...</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Il est évident que...</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Je regrette que...</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Il est probable que...</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Choose the correct ending to complete the sentences.

1. Comme ils aimaient beaucoup Fabienne, les enfants de la famille Méglier avaient pour que...
   a. leur ancienne babysitteuse soit de nouveau disponible.
   b. leur ancienne babysitteuse est de nouveau disponible.

2. L’année prochaine, Adama espère...
   a. que les amis fassent un projet de vacances ensemble.
   b. que les amis feront un projet de vacances ensemble.

3. Après ses études, Adama veut...
   a. qu’il retourne au Sénégal.
   b. retourner au Sénégal.

4. Sandra est surprise que...
   a. Bruno, son frère jumeau, veuille aussi quitter la Martinique.
   b. Bruno, son frère jumeau, veut aussi quitter la Martinique.

C. Complete the following sentences with the correct form of the subjunctive.

1. Yann regrette que les études de médecine ______ (être) si longues.
2. Il voudrait que son stage lui ______ (permettre) de choisir une spécialité.
3. Ses parents sont fiers que leur fils ______ (faire) des études de médecine, même s’ils sont tristes que Yann ______ (habiter) Paris plutôt que la Bretagne.
4. Yann a choisi Paris parce qu’il doute que les universités de province ______ (offrir) les mêmes avantages.
5. Il se peut qu’il ______ (prendre) la décision de s’installer en Bretagne quand il aura fini ses études, mais il n’a pas encore fait son choix.

D. Write the question that elicits the response given. Keep in mind that the person posing the question is unsure of the answer.

1. —Est-ce qu’il y a...?
   —Oui, il y a un hôtel proche qui n’est pas cher.
2. —Est-ce que tu... ?
   —Oui, je connais quelqu’un qui fait des sculptures en bois.
3. —Est-ce qu’il y a... ?
   —Oui, il y a un médecin qui sait parler créole.
4. —Avez-vous... ?
   —Oui, nous avons des papiers que vous devez signer.

3. Conjunctions that require the subjunctive

Certain subordinating conjunctions require the subjunctive, regardless of the verb in the main clause. A subordinating conjunction links a main clause with a dependent clause. A main clause can stand alone to form a grammatical sentence. A subordinate (or dependent) clause cannot stand alone and thus depends on the main clause in order to form a complete thought.

Main clause  Subordinate clause

Fabienne adore aller au cinéma, à condition qu’un de ses amis vienne avec elle. 
*Fabienne loves to go to the movies, as long as one of her friends comes with her.*

Here is a list of subordinating conjunctions that trigger the subjunctive:

à condition que...  as long as ...
afin que...  so that ...
à moins que...  unless ...
autant que...  as far as ...
avant que...  before ...
bien que...  although ...
de crainte que...  for fear that ...
de peur que...  for fear that ...
jusqu’à ce que...  until ...
pour que...  so that
pourvu que...  provided that ...
quoique...  although ...
sans que...  without ...

The conjunctions à moins que, avant que, de crainte (peur) que, and sans que not only require the subjunctive, but in written French also require the negative particle ne. This ne, added in the subordinate clause, does not express negation, and is not translated in English. It is often dropped in spoken French.

Fabienne prend le métro de crainte qu’il n’y ait des bouchons.  
*Fabienne takes the subway for fear there will be traffic jams.*

Bien que, à moins que, jusqu’à ce que, and quoique permit the same subject in both clauses.

Bien que Nathalie soit très franche,
   elle sait aussi écouter.  
*Although Nathalie is very frank, she is also able to listen.*
Not all conjunctions require the subjunctive. Here are some common conjunctions that require the indicative mood:

après que... after...
depuis que... since...
parce que... because...
pendant que... while...
puisque... given that...

Après que j’ai fini de regarder l’émission, j’ai travaillé.  
After I finished watching the TV show, I studied.

Some subordinating conjunctions have corresponding prepositions that are followed by the infinitive instead of the subjunctive. When the subject is the same in both clauses, the infinitive is used.

à condition de + infinitive  de crainte de + infinitive
da moins de + infinitive  de peur de + infinitive
afin de + infinitive  sans + infinitive
avant de + infinitive

Xavier fait de son mieux afin d’impressionner les autres.  
Xavier does his best in order to impress others.

Xavier fait de son mieux afin que les autres soient impressionnés.  
Xavier does his best so that the others are impressed.

Sandra remercie toujours ses hôtes avant de partir.  
Sandra always thanks her hosts before leaving.

Sandra remercie toujours ses invités avant qu’ils ne partent.  
Sandra always thanks her guests before they leave.

À votre tour!

A. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the subjunctive of the verb in parentheses.

1. Fabienne craint que les enfants qu’elle surveille ne ______ (regarder) trop de télé.
2. Mais les enfants n’ont rien dit, peut-être de peur qu’elle ne leur ______ (permettre) pas de regarder leur émission préférée à la télévision.
3. D’ailleurs, ils sont ravis que leur babysitteuse ______ (venir) d’un autre pays, et ils voudraient que leurs parents ______ (choisir) Québec comme destination pour les prochaines vacances.
4. Bien que les enfants ______ (être) quelquefois fatigants, Fabienne les trouve adorables et est très contente d’avoir rencontré la famille Méglion.

B. Complete each sentence with a preposition + infinitive or a conjunction with the subjunctive.

1. Les parents de Nathalie lui ont acheté un billet de train ______ (pour / pour qu’) elle ______ (pouvoir / puisse) passer Noël avec eux.
2. Nathalie est venue s’installer à Paris ______ (afin de / afin qu’) ______ (faire / faisse) des études de lettres à la Sorbonne.
3. Elle a quitté Avignon non ____ (sans / sans qu') ____ (regretter / regrette) sa chère Provence. Mais elle est très satisfaite de sa vie à Paris.
4. Elle aime faire du sport ____ (à condition de / à condition que) ce ____ (être / soit) un sport d'équipe comme le volley. Elle n'aime pas beaucoup les sports individuels.
5. Nathalie a l'intention de retourner en Provence, ____ (à moins d' / à moins qu') il ne ____ (se passer / se passe) quelque chose d'inattendu.

C. Complete each sentence with either the present indicative or the present subjunctive of the verb in parentheses.

1. Une chose que Fabienne n'apprécie pas à Paris, c'est la circulation. Il faut toujours qu'elle ____ (partir) en avance, le matin pour être sûr d'arriver à l'heure à la fac.
2. Il est évident que, dans une grande ville comme Paris, de tels inconvenients ____ (être) inévitables.
3. Elle est toujours surprise que cela n' ____ (avoir) pas l'air de déranger les Parisiens.
4. Il est vrai qu'ils en ____ (avoir) plus l'habitude qu'elle.

4. Past subjunctive

4.1 Formation of the past subjunctive

The past subjunctive is formed with the present subjunctive of the appropriate auxiliary verb (avoir or être) and the past participle of the main verb. The rules for the selection of the auxiliary and past participle agreement are identical to the passé composé (See Point clé: Parler du passé).

Subjunctive of être or avoir + past participle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fabienne a été surprise qu'un des enfants soit parti sans permission.</td>
<td>Fabienne was surprised that one of the children had left without permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xavier et Sandra ont eu peur que la mère de Sandra n'ait pas cru leur histoire.</td>
<td>Xavier and Sandra were scared that Sandra's mother did not believe their story.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Using the past subjunctive

The past subjunctive is normally used in subordinate clauses that describe an action that precedes the action of the main clause. The past subjunctive is introduced by the same kinds of clauses that introduce the present subjunctive (necessity, obligation, doubt, will, desire, emotion, opinion, and certain conjunctions). Note that the tense of the verb in the main clause in French does not predict the tense of the subjunctive in the dependent clause. The choice between the present or past subjunctive depends on the chronological relationship between the two clauses. The past subjunctive indicates an event that occurred prior to the event reported in the main clause. Compare the sentences on the next page that summarize the uses of the present and past subjunctive.
À votre tour!

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the past subjunctive of the verbs in parentheses.

1. Il est difficile de croire que les parents de Xavier ______ (réagir) positivement quand Xavier leur a annoncé qu’il ne voulait plus étudier la médecine.

2. Ils ne pensent pas que Xavier ______ (perdre) son temps ces derniers mois, même s’il a changé d’avis.

3. Sa mère regrette simplement qu’il ______ (ne pas se décider) plus tôt, mais c’est comme ça!

4. Mais il est bon qu’il ______ (trouver) une véritable passion.

5. Imperative mood (Commands)

The imperative mood (l’impératif in French) is used to give commands or orders. You may recognize the imperative from common commands such as Écoutez or Répétez.

5.1 Regular forms

There are three forms of the imperative: tu, nous, and vous. For all verbs, the imperative is formed by using the present indicative without subject pronouns. The lack of a subject pronoun is what identifies the imperative mood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINIR (to finish)</th>
<th>IMPERATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu finis</td>
<td>Finis!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nous finissons</td>
<td>Finissons!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vous finissez</td>
<td>Finissez!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finish!

Let’s finish!

Finish!