

Imperative, Subjunctive & Conditional

Ferman • Awayê Daxwazî • Hevokên Şertî

English explanations • Kurmanji examples • Guided exercises • Answer key

Three constructions at a glance

Function	Kurmanji	English
Imperative	Bîçe!	Go!
Non-indicative	Ez dixwazim biçim.	I want to go.
Conditional	Heke tu werî, em ê biaxivin. Eger tu werî, em ê biaxivin.	If you come, we will talk.
Future + non-indicative	Tu yê biçî.	You will go.

Learning objectives — Armancên fêrbûnê

Distinguish commands (imperative), non-indicative/subjunctive forms, and conditional sentences in Kurmanji. Understand their different functions, common prefixes, person endings, negation, and the connection with English if, let's, should, could and would.

1. Three related ideas, three different jobs

Imperative tells someone to do something: Bîçe! — Go! Subjunctive/non-indicative forms occur after certain markers and in wishes or subordinate clauses: Ez dixwazim biçim. — I want to go. A conditional sentence states a condition and consequence: Heke tu werî, em ê biaxivin. — If you come, we will talk. A conditional sentence is a construction, not simply a third verb mood identical to the other two.

2. The imperative: commands and requests — Awayê fermanî

Bîçe! — Go! Were! — Come! Bixwîne! — Read!/Study! Binivîse! — Write! For more than one addressee: Biçin! — Go! Werin! — Come! Bixwînin! — Read! Forms can vary with lexical verb and dialect; memorize common irregular verbs rather than assuming a single mechanical rule.

3. Negative imperatives — Fermanên neyînî

Neçe! — Don't go! Newere! — Don't come! Nexwîne! — Don't read! Neçin! — Don't go! (plural). In many common imperative forms the negative uses ne- rather than the affirmative bi-. Compare Bîçe! and Neçe!.

4. Requests and politeness

An imperative is not automatically rude, but context and tone matter. Ji kerema xwe, were. — Please come. Ji kerema xwe, li vir rûne. — Please sit here. Requests may also be expressed as questions rather than commands.

5. Subjunctive/non-indicative: when it appears — Awayê daxwazî

The label “subjunctive” is useful for teaching, but exact linguistic terminology differs by grammar. A common non-indicative pattern uses bi- plus a verb stem and person endings. Compare Ez diçim. — I go/am going, with Ez dixwazim biçim. — I want to go. The second verb biçim is not an English infinitive.

6. A practical paradigm: çûn (to go)

Ez biçim — that I go; Tu biçî — that you go; Ew biçe — that he/she go; Em biçin — that we go; Hûn biçin — that you (plural) go; Ew biçin — that they go. These forms also appear in future and conditional environments. The second-person singular imperative Biçe! is distinct from the second-person subjunctive biçî.

7. The non-indicative with desire and necessity

Ez dixwazim biçim. — I want to go. Tu dixwazî biçî. — You want to go. Divê ez biçim. — I must/should go. Divê tu bixwînî. — You should/must study. The complement form is crucial: do not automatically add the indicative di- to the second verb.

8. Future and the non-indicative

Ez ê biçim. — I will go. Tu yê biçî. — You will go. Ew ê biçe. — He/she will go. Em ê biçin. — We will go. These forms connect directly to Lesson 08; ê/dê marks future reference while the following verb uses a non-indicative form.

9. Negative non-indicative forms

Ez ê neçim. — I will not go. Ez naxwazim biçim. — I do not want to go. Notice the different scope: the first negates going; the second negates wanting. The position and form of negation depend on the construction.

10. Real/open conditions: heke — Hevokên şertî

Heke tu werî, em ê biaxivin. — If you come, we will talk. Heke baran bibare, em ê li malê bimînin. — If it rains, we will stay at home. A heke-clause can contain a non-indicative verb; the main clause may express a future consequence.

11. Condition versus consequence

Heke ez wextê xwe hebim, ez ê bixwînim. — If I have time, I will study. In an English if-sentence, the condition and the result may use different tense/mood patterns. Do not translate the English will in the if-clause mechanically.

12. Hypothetical and counterfactual conditions

English “If I had time, I would go” differs from the open future condition “If I have time, I will go.” Kurmanji expresses hypothetical and counterfactual meanings through additional tense-aspect and conditional patterns that vary across varieties. A single universal English would = one Kurmanji word rule would be misleading. This introductory lesson emphasizes robust open-condition patterns and flags the more advanced distinction for further study.

13. English could, would and should revisited

Could can express ability, possibility or politeness; would can express hypothetical results, politeness or past habits; should often expresses advice. Kurmanji may use a conditional clause, a question, divê/baş e ku, or a past habitual form depending on meaning. See Lesson 10 for the full meaning-based comparison.

14. Contrast chart

Biçe! — Go! (imperative). Tu biçî — that you go (non-indicative). Tu yê biçî. — You will go (future + non-indicative). Heke tu werî, em ê bixivin. — If you come, we will talk (conditional construction). These are not interchangeable.

15. Mini dialogue — Axaftin

A: Ji kerema xwe, were! — Please come! B: Ez ê werim. — I will come. A: Heke tu werî, em ê bixivin. — If you come, we will talk. B: Baş e. — All right.

16. Common mistakes — Çewtiyên gelemperî

Do not use the second-person subjunctive biçî as the normal singular command; use Biçe! Do not assume all commands begin with bi-; common verbs can be irregular. Do not confuse the future marker ê with the imperative. Do not translate all English would-sentences using xwestin. Do not assume all dialects form advanced counterfactuals identically.

17. Exercises — Rahênan

A. Translate: Biçe!; Neçe!; Werin!; Ez dixwazim biçim. B. Choose the second-person singular non-indicative: biçî or biçê? C. Fill the gap: Heke tu ____ (werin), em ê bixivin. D. Translate: If it rains, we will stay at home. E. Explain the difference between Tu yê biçî and Biçe! F. Make the plural command from Biçe! G. Negate Ez ê biçim.

18. Answer key — Bersiv

A. Go!; Don't go!; Come! (plural); I want to go. B. biçî. C. werî. D. Heke baran bibare, em ê li malê bimînin. E. The first is a future statement; the second is a command. F. Biçin! G. Ez ê neçim.

19. References and editorial note — Çavkanî

Consult W. M. Thackston, *Kurmanji Kurdish: A Reference Grammar* (2006), and descriptive studies of Kurmanji morphosyntax by Geoffrey Haig and Ergin Öpengin. This teaching guide prioritizes common, accessible examples. Regional variation and advanced hypothetical constructions require further dialect-specific checking. No independent native-speaker editorial review has been performed.

20. Next lesson — Dersa pêş

Lesson 12 — Adjectives (Rengdêr): descriptions, agreement patterns, ezafe connections and comparison.