



Imperatives: Mixed Imperatives & Common Confusions

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- The emergency notice reads: '_____ the building calmly. Do not use the lifts.'
a) Leave
b) You leave
c) Leaving
d) To leave
- First, _____ all the screws from the back panel, then lift the cover off carefully.
a) you removing
b) remove
c) removes
d) to remove
- _____ rush — we still have plenty of time before the flight.
a) Let's don't
b) Not let's
c) Let's not
d) Let don't
- Work hard _____ you'll be rewarded. Dedication always pays off.
a) or
b) but
c) yet
d) and
- _____ sign any contract without reading every word of it.
a) Never
b) Not ever
c) No
d) Don't never
- The food looks amazing. _____ start with the appetizers.
a) Let to
b) We let's
c) Let's
d) Lets
- Please _____ interrupt when someone else is speaking. Wait for your turn.
a) not
b) don't
c) no
d) doesn't
- You look stressed. _____ take a deep breath and relax for a moment.
a) Do
b) Doing
c) To
d) Does
- _____ the door behind you when you leave. We don't want bugs getting in.
a) Closing
b) To close
c) Closes
d) Close
- Stay focused during the exam _____ you might make careless mistakes and lose marks.
a) and
b) or
c) but
d) so
- The recipe says: '_____ the mixture gently for five minutes. Don't let it boil.'
a) Stirs
b) Stirring
c) Stir
d) To stir

12. _____ compare yourself to others. Everyone's journey is different.
a) Not
b) No
c) Doesn't
d) Don't
13. _____ kind to everyone you meet. You never know what they might be going through.
a) Always be
b) Always being
c) Always to be
d) Always been
14. _____ the positive side of every situation. It will make you happier.
a) Looking at
b) To look at
c) Look at
d) Looks at
15. _____ sit there doing nothing! Come and help me carry these bags.
a) Not just
b) Don't just
c) Just not
d) No just
16. _____ put up with bad treatment from anyone. You deserve to be respected.
a) Not
b) No
c) Doesn't
d) Never
17. The doctor advised her _____ more water every day.
a) to drink
b) drink
c) drinking
d) drinks
18. A good manager _____ always listen to their team's ideas.
a) listen
b) should
c) listening
d) listens
19. The sign says 'No smoking', so you _____ smoke here.
a) don't
b) not
c) mustn't
d) smoking
20. I think you _____ to her. What you said was really hurtful.
a) apologize
b) apologizing
c) to apologize
d) should apologize



Answers

1. a) Leave
2. b) remove
3. c) Let's not
4. d) and
5. a) Never
6. c) Let's
7. b) don't
8. a) Do
9. d) Close
10. b) or
11. c) Stir
12. d) Don't
13. a) Always be
14. c) Look at
15. b) Don't just
16. d) Never
17. a) to drink
18. b) should
19. c) mustn't
20. d) should apologize



Explanations

1. “Leave” (a)

Formal signs and notices use the imperative (base verb) for instructions: 'Leave the building'. No subject is needed.

2. “remove” (b)

Instruction manuals use the imperative form: 'remove all the screws'. Each step is a direct command using the base verb.

3. “Let's not” (c)

The negative of 'Let's' is 'Let's not' + base verb: 'Let's not rush'. 'Let's don't' is not standard English.

4. “and” (d)

'Imperative + and' expresses a positive consequence: 'Work hard and you'll be rewarded' = If you work hard, you will be rewarded.

5. “Never” (a)

'Never' + imperative gives strong, permanent advice. 'Don't never' is a double negative and is incorrect in standard English.

6. “Let's” (c)

'Let's' (= Let us) + base verb makes a suggestion. 'Lets' without an apostrophe is a completely different word (He lets the cat out).

7. “don't” (b)

The polite negative imperative is 'Please don't' + base verb. 'Please not' and 'Please no' are not grammatically correct for commands.

8. “Do” (a)

'Do' + imperative adds warmth and encouragement: 'Do take a deep breath' shows genuine concern and is more persuasive than the plain imperative.

9. “Close” (d)

The imperative uses the base form of the verb: 'Close the door'. No subject or auxiliary is needed.

10. “or” (b)

'Imperative + or' warns about a negative consequence: 'Stay focused or you might make mistakes' = If you don't stay focused, you'll make mistakes.

11. “Stir” (c)

Recipe steps use the imperative: 'Stir the mixture', 'Add the flour', 'Heat the oven'. Always the base form of the verb.

12. “Don't” (d)

The negative imperative is formed with 'Don't' + base verb: 'Don't compare yourself to others'. 'Not' or 'No' alone cannot form a negative command.

13. “Always be” (a)

'Always' + imperative (base verb) gives life advice: 'Always be kind'. 'Always being' and 'Always to be' are not imperative forms.

14. “Look at” (c)

The imperative uses the base form: 'Look at the positive side'. This is a motivational command giving life advice.

15. “Don't just” (b)

'Don't just + verb' is a common pattern meaning 'stop only doing this': 'Don't just sit there!' urges someone to take action instead of being passive.

16. “Never” (d)

'Never' + imperative gives strong, empowering advice: 'Never put up with bad treatment'. It's stronger and more permanent than 'Don't'.

17. “to drink” (a)

After 'advised + person', we use the to-infinitive: 'advised her to drink'. This is reported advice, not a direct imperative. The direct imperative would be: 'Drink more water!'

18. “should” (b)

With a subject ('A good manager'), we need a modal verb: 'should always listen'. A bare imperative ('listen') has no subject and can't follow 'A good manager' directly.

19. “mustn't” (c)

'Mustn't' expresses prohibition: 'You mustn't smoke here'. With a subject ('you'), we need a modal verb. A direct imperative would simply be: 'Don't smoke here!'

20. “should apologize” (d)

After 'I think you', we need a modal for advice: 'I think you should apologize'. The subject 'you' requires a finite verb form. A direct imperative would be: 'Apologize to her!'