

Mood

Mood is that aspect of the verb that expresses the action in reference to reality. The word mood comes to the English from the Latin *mōdus* meaning “a measure, a standard of measure,” and speaks of the “mode, way, or manner” in which the action occurs. There are four moods in the Greek: the indicative expresses the action as really taking place; the subjunctive expresses the action as potentially taking place; the optative expresses the action as a wish (potential but weaker than the subjunctive); and the imperative expresses a command. It should be noted that the mood expresses the action in relation to reality, whether it is an objective fact or not is not the point but rather how the matter is conceived.

Drs. Dana & Mantey express it best when they write, “In the expression of the verbal idea it is necessary to define its relation to reality: that which has, will, or does now exist. For instance, it is impossible to present the thought of a child running without affirming either the *fact* of his running – in present, past, or future, or the *possibility* of his running. To say, “The child runs,” places the statement in the first category; to say, “If the child runs,” presents the second. This *affirmation of relation to reality* is mood.”¹

The mood has traditionally been classified in two groups: that which is actual and that which is possible as follows:

Actual	Possible	
Indicative	Subjunctive	Objectively possible
	Optative	Objectively possible

¹ Dana & Mantey, p. 165

	Imperative	Volitionally possible
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Uses of the Indicative Mood

The indicative is the declarative mood, expressing the assertion of certainty and expresses the action as if it were a reality. The word indicative comes to the English from the Latin *indicare* meaning “to make known, show, indicate.”

Declarative indicative. The most common usage of the indicative is the declarative, also referred to as the statement of fact. For example, John 1:1: ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λογος, και ὁ λογος ἦν προς τον θεος, και θεος ἦν ὁ λογος (In the beginning **was** the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God). Matt. 16:16: ἀποκριθεις δε Σιμων Πετρος εἶπεν· συ εἶ ὁ χριστος ὁ υιος τοῦ ζῶντος. (And Simon and Peter answered and said, You **are** the Christ, the Son of the living God).

Interrogative indicative. An interrogative indicative is used when the speaker wants to ask a simple question and expect a declarative indicative in the answer². The interrogative indicative is often found with the interrogative particle εἶ. For example, Matt. 27:11: ὁ δε Ἰησους ἐσταθη ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ ἡγεμονος και ἐπηρωτησεν αὐτον ὁ ἡγεμων λεγων· συ εἶ ὁ βασιλευς τῶν Ἰουδαιων; ὁ δε Ἰησοῦς ἔφη· συ λεγεις. (And Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him saying, **Are** You the king of the Jews? And Jesus said to him, [it is as] you say).

Cohortative indicative. The future indicative is sometimes used to express a command. For example, James 2:8: εἰ μεντοι νομον τελειτε βασιλικον κατα την γραφην **ἀγαπησεις** τον πλησιον σου ὡς σεαυτον, καλῶς ποιειτε· (If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, “**You shall love** your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well). 1 Peter 1:16: διοτι γεγραπται ὅτι ἅγιοι ἔσεσθε, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἅγιος εἰμι. (Because it is written, **be** holy, because I am holy).

Potential indicative. At times the indicative is used to express some form of potential action. Under this category are found three types: obligation, wish, and condition.

1. *Indicative of obligation.* When the indicative is used with the verbs δεῖ (it is necessary) or ὀφειλω (I ought) the meaning is one of obligation. For example, 1 John 4:11: ἀγαπητοι, εἰ οὕτως ὁ θεος ἠγαπησεν ἡμᾶς, και ἡμεῖς **ὀφειλομεν** ἀλληλους ἀγαπῆν. (Beloved, if God so loved us, **we** also **ought** to love one another).

² Daniel Wallace, p. 449

2. *Indicative of wish.* When the indicative is used with verbs of volition (θελω, βουλομαι, I wish, or ὄφελον, I would that) the meaning is one of desire or wish. For example, 1 Cor. 7:32: **Θελω** δε ὑμᾶς ἀμεριμνους εἶναι. ὁ ἄγαμος μεριμνᾷ τα τοῦ κυριου, πῶς ἀπεση τῷ κυριῷ (But **I wish** you to be free from worry. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord).
3. *Indicative of condition.* When the indicative is used in either a First or Second Class Condition, the idea is one of condition. For example, John 11:21: εἶπεν οὖν ἡ Μαρθα προς τον Ἰησοῦν κυριε, εἰ ἦς ὧδε οὐκ ἂν ἀπεθανεν ὁ ἀδελφος μου (The Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother **would not have died**). A second class condition is the condition of impossibility.