

AMA Manual of Style

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Mood

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Verbs may have 1 of 3 moods: (1) the indicative (the most common; used for ordinary objective statements), (2) the imperative (used for requesting or commanding), and (3) the subjunctive. Subjunctive verbs cause the most difficulty; they are used primarily for expressing a wish (I wish it were possible), a supposition (If I were to accept the position...), or a condition that is uncertain or contrary to fact (If that were true...; If I were younger...). The subjunctive occurs in fairly formal situations and usually involves past (were) or present (be) forms. The subjunctive is sometimes used incorrectly, eg, where