

Using Conditionals – Cause and Effect



If you do these things, what happens?

- Eat a lot of junk food
- Smoke
- Exercise daily
- Study hard

1st Conditional

If you *eat* a lot of junk food, you **will**...

If you *smoke*, you **might**...

If + present simple (subject + verb), subject + **will / might / can + infinitive**

If you did these things, what would happen?

- Meet Donald Trump
- Become king of your country
- Ban advertising to children
- Get a 9 in IELTS

2nd Conditional

If I *met* Donald Trump, I **would**...

If the government *banned* advertising to children, it **could**...

If + past simple (subject + verb), subject + **would / could / should + infinitive**

Now write some sentences: 1st + 2nd cond.

Examples: If the population of a country is better educated, it will have economic benefits for the whole country.

If the UK invested more in engineers and innovation, it would not need to import so many goods from other countries.

1. If children have too much homework, they won't have any free time
2. If schools stopped giving homework, pupils wouldn't learn at home.
3. If children are forced to think about their future too early, they won't enjoy their childhood
4. When you play sports such as hockey or basketball at school, you will have more opportunities to play them in a team, too.
5. If you do not learn about a healthy lifestyle when you are a child, you won't have good eating habits
6. If parents did the school run on foot instead of driving, it would help the environment

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Complete the ^{3rd} Conditional

Student A

A. Read through the third conditional sentences (1 to 10) below and think about how you could complete the gaps. Where there is a (+) the verb phrase is positive, and where there is a (-) the verb phrase is negative. A contraction (e.g. wouldn't) counts as one word. Don't write anything yet!

1. If I had studied harder, I would have passed the exam. (+)
2. If it hadn't rained, we could have gone to the beach. (-)
3. I would have sent you a postcard if I had known your address. (+)
4. If I'd known it was going to be sunny, I would have worn my sunglasses. (+)
5. He would have been on time for the interview if he hadn't left the house late. (-)
6. If I had paid more attention in class, I would have understood the lesson. (+)
7. If we had gone to the cinema, we would have seen Star Wars. (+)
8. We would have swum in the sea if there hadn't been so many jellyfish. (-)
9. If you had saved your money, you could have bought a house. (+)
10. If I had seen them, I would have invited them to the party. (+)

B. Read your first sentence to your partner. If it's wrong, try again until he/she tells you it's correct. Then write the correct answer in the sentence. Continue with sentences 2 to 10.

C. Now, listen to your partner say sentence A. If he/she says the exact words you have in **bold**, tell him/her 'That's right'. If not, say 'Try again'. Your partner must continue to guess until he/she says the exact words. Then continue with the other sentences.

- A. If I had not broken my leg, I **would have taken** part in the competition. (+)
- B. If it had snowed, we **could have gone** skiing. (+)
- C. If you had driven more carefully, you **wouldn't have had** an accident. (-)
- D. She **wouldn't have been tired** if she had gone to bed earlier. (-)
- E. If I **had seen** him at the meeting, I would have asked him. (+)
- F. If I hadn't eaten so much, I **wouldn't have felt** sick. (-)
- G. If we had taken a taxi, we **wouldn't have missed** the plane. (-)
- H. Their teacher would have been sad if they **hadn't passed** their exam. (-)
- I. If I **had had** more time, I would have gone to see him. (+)
- J. If we had played a little better, we **could have won** the match. (+)
- K. If you **had asked** me, I would have helped you. (+)

Make sentences in the 3rd conditional using these prompts:

If...

have more time

study harder

see her yesterday

know you/ coming

learn another language

speak to my boss sooner

not be ill

catch the train

say hello

arrive on time

go to the concert

bake a cake

be bilingual

avoid the problem

take you to the station

pass the exam

1. If I had learnt another language, I would ^{have} been bilingual.
2. If I had spoken to my boss sooner, I would have avoided the problem.
3. If I hadn't been ill, I would have gone to the concert.
4. If I had seen her yesterday, I would have said her hello.
5. If I had had more time, I would have taken you to the station.

Mixed Conditionals

Those of you who have been following the Conditional Tutorial should now be familiar with present, past and future conditional verb forms. Sometimes Unreal Conditional sentences are mixed. This means that the time in the if-clause is not the same as the time in the result. Study the examples below to learn how to mix conditional verb forms like a native speaker.

Verbs in green are in the Present Unreal Conditional.

Verbs in red are in the Past Unreal Conditional.

Verbs in purple are in the Future Unreal Conditional.

Mixed Conditional Patterns

PAST

PRESENT

Examples:

- If I **had won** the lottery, I **would be** rich.
BUT I DIDN'T WIN THE LOTTERY IN THE PAST AND I AM NOT RICH NOW.
- If I **had taken** French in high school, I **would have** more job opportunities.
BUT I DIDN'T TAKE FRENCH IN HIGH SCHOOL AND I DON'T HAVE MANY JOB OPPORTUNITIES.
- If she **had been born** in the United States, she **wouldn't need** a visa to work here.
BUT SHE WASN'T BORN IN THE UNITED STATES AND SHE DOES NEED A VISA NOW TO WORK HERE.

PAST

FUTURE

Examples:

- If she **had signed** up for the ski trip last week, she **would be joining** us tomorrow.
BUT SHE DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR THE SKI TRIP LAST WEEK AND SHE ISN'T GOING TO JOIN US TOMORROW.
- If Mark **had gotten** the job instead of Joe, he **would be moving** to Shanghai.
BUT MARK DIDN'T GET THE JOB AND MARK IS NOT GOING TO MOVE TO SHANGHAI.
- If Darren **hadn't wasted** his Christmas bonus gambling in Las Vegas, he **would go** to Mexico with us next month.
BUT DARREN WASTED HIS CHRISTMAS BONUS GAMBLING IN LAS VEGAS AND HE WON'T GO TO MEXICO WITH US NEXT MONTH.

PRESENT

PAST

Examples:

- If I **were** rich, I **would have bought** that Ferrari we saw yesterday.
BUT I AM NOT CURRENTLY RICH AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T BUY THE FERRARI YESTERDAY.
- If Sam **spoke** Russian, he **would have translated** the letter for you.
BUT SAM DOESN'T SPEAK RUSSIAN AND THAT IS WHY HE DIDN'T TRANSLATE THE LETTER.
- If I **didn't have** to work so much, I **would have gone** to the party last night.
BUT I HAVE TO WORK A LOT AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T GO TO THE PARTY LAST NIGHT.

PRESENT**FUTURE**

Examples:

- If I **didn't have** so much vacation time, I **wouldn't go** with you on the cruise to Alaska next week.
BUT I DO HAVE A LOT OF VACATION TIME AND I WILL GO ON THE TRIP NEXT WEEK.
- If Cindy **were** more creative, the company **would send** her to New York to work on the new advertising campaign.
BUT CINDY IS NOT CREATIVE AND THE COMPANY WON'T SEND HER TO NEW YORK TO WORK ON THE NEW CAMPAIGN.
- If Dan **weren't** so nice, he **wouldn't be tutoring** you in math tonight.
BUT DAN IS NICE AND HE IS GOING TO TUTOR YOU TONIGHT.

FUTURE**PAST**

Examples:

- If I **weren't going** on my business trip next week, I **would have accepted** that new assignment at work.
BUT I AM GOING TO GO ON A BUSINESS TRIP NEXT WEEK, AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T ACCEPT THAT NEW ASSIGNMENT AT WORK.
- If my parents **weren't coming** this weekend, I **would have planned** a nice trip just for the two of us to Napa Valley.
BUT MY PARENTS ARE GOING TO COME THIS WEEKEND, AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T PLAN A TRIP FOR THE TWO OF US TO NAPA VALLEY.
- If Donna **weren't making** us a big dinner tonight, I **would have suggested** that we go to that nice Italian restaurant.
BUT SHE IS GOING TO MAKE US A BIG DINNER TONIGHT, AND THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T SUGGEST THAT WE GO TO THAT NICE ITALIAN RESTAURANT.

FUTURE**PRESENT**

Examples:

- If I **were going** to that concert tonight, I **would be** very excited.
BUT I AM NOT GOING TO GO TO THAT CONCERT TONIGHT AND THAT IS WHY I AM NOT EXCITED.
- If Sandy **were giving** a speech tomorrow, she **would be** very nervous.
BUT SANDY IS NOT GOING TO GIVE A SPEECH TOMORROW AND THAT IS WHY SHE IS NOT NERVOUS.
- If Seb **didn't come** with us to the desert, everyone **would be** very disappointed.