

Overview of second and third conditionals

GRAMMAR

LEVEL
Intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3A20G

LANGUAGE
English





Goals

- Can form the second and third conditionals and use them accurately in a sentence.
- Can use the third conditional to express regrets, wishes and future possibilities.



If everyone **spoke** the same language,
the world **would be** a less interesting
place.

I **wouldn't have read** Shakespeare if I
hadn't studied him in school.

But if I **had listened** more in German,
maybe I **would speak** the language
better!



Preview and warm-up

- In this lesson, we will look at **second**, **third** and **mixed conditionals**.
- We will **review** how they are **formed** and **used**.



If I **worked** from home, I **would be** more productive.



Second conditional

- *If* + subject + past simple, + subject + *would* + bare infinitive.



If I *had* more free time, I *would* learn a new language.

If I *were* the CEO, I *would* hire more women.





Second conditional

- We use the second conditional to talk about:
 - **Possible** situations and their **probable** results;
 - Situations we **do not expect** to happen;
 - **Imagined situations** that are different from the real situation.

<i>If</i> clause	Main clause	Meaning
If I didn't go to work , I would be fired.		This is an imagined situation and with a probable result .
If I won lots of money , I would retire.		This is a very unlikely situation that probably won't happen .
If he knew her address , he would visit her.		This is an imagined situation . The real situation is that he doesn't know her address.



Choose the best option to complete each of the sentences

1. If I lived in London, I _____ to see plays in the West End all the time.

- a. will go b. would go c. go d. goes

2. If she _____ out of the city, she would have to take the train to work every day.

- a. move b. moved c. would move d. moving

3. If we employed another intern, we _____ move you to another room, as there wouldn't be enough space here.

- a. won't b. wouldn't c. would have to d. will have to

4. If I _____ the boss, people in my team would be able to arrive at work whenever they liked.

- a. became b. become c. would become d. would be



Using modal verbs in the second conditional

- You can use other **modal verbs** in the **second conditional**.
- Using verbs like **could** and **might** allows you to express **ability** and **possibility**.
- You can use these modals in the same way as **would**.



If I sold my car, I **could take** the bus to work instead.

If you studied harder, your grades **might improve**.





Talking about your career

You are thinking of changing careers. Use the second conditional to discuss the possibilities and advantages of the jobs below.

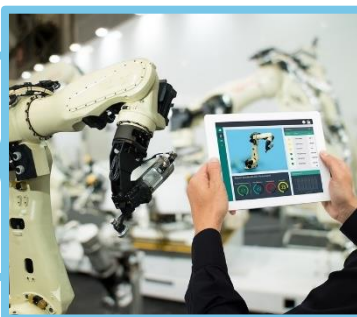
If I worked as a journalist, I would meet lots of interesting people.



Journalist



Investment banker



Engineer



Artist



Imagine you are at a job interview

Your teacher will be the interviewer and will ask you the following questions. Practise responding using the second conditional.

If a customer was unhappy, what would you do?

If we called your previous boss and asked him/her what you were like to work with, what would he/she say?

If you didn't get along with one of your colleagues, what would you do?

If a customer was rude to you, what would you do?

What would you do if you noticed one of your colleagues was on social media a lot while at work?

If you couldn't find the solution to a problem, what would you do?



Third conditional

- *If + subject + past perfect, + subject + would + have + past participle.*



If I had listened in the meeting, I **would have known** what to do.

If he had wanted a lift, he would have told me.





Third conditional

- The **third conditional** describes **an imagined past event**.
- We often use it when we **regret** something that didn't happen.
- We wish the **action** or the **event in the main clause had happened**.

<i>If</i> clause	Main clause	Meaning
If I had seen you , I would have said hello.		But I didn't see you, so I couldn't say hello (but I wish I had done).
If I hadn't been tired , I would have gone to the party.		But I was too tired, so I didn't go (but I wish I had gone).
If he had taken the job , he would have been very happy.		But he didn't take the job, so it isn't possible for him to feel happy.



James has recently moved to Australia. Choose the correct answers to fill the gaps

1. James says if he _____ to Australia, he would not have advanced so far in his career.

- a. had travelled b. had moved c. had not moved d. has not moved

2. If he had stayed in England, he never _____ to surf.

- a. would have learnt b. learnt c. would learn d. learn

3. One challenge is being far away from home. If he had not left, he _____ to his brother's wedding last year.

- a. would not have gone b. went c. could have gone d. could go

4. He might not have enjoyed his experience so much if his boss _____ him so much responsibility.

- a. would not give b. gave c. hasn't got d. had not given



Fill in the gaps

Ellen is reflecting on her experience doing a semester as an exchange student in the United States. Complete the sentences using the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. If I _____ [not hear] about the student exchange programme from a friend, I would have never applied.
2. I went to a big university in Texas. There were over 40,000 students. If I had not lived in an apartment with six other girls, I _____ [not make] any friends.
3. They were great housemates. If they had not taken me to parties and invited me to their homes, I _____ [have] a very different experience.
4. I also wanted to travel throughout the States, but didn't do much. If I had not been so busy at university, I _____ [travel] more.
5. Of course, Texas is big. Even if I _____ [drive] for eight hours, I would have still been in Texas!





The third conditional describes what didn't happen in the past Read each sentence and briefly describe what really happened.

1. If I had not gone to Australia, I would never have learnt how to surf.



I did go to Australia and did learn to surf.

2. If he had worked harder on that project, he would have got a promotion.



3. If she had not travelled to California, she would not have seen the giant redwoods.



4. If you had not left our dog at home alone, he would not have chewed up my shoes!



5. If you had read the book, you might have enjoyed the film more.





Continuous tenses and the third conditional

- *If + subject + past perfect, + would + have + been + -ing form.*
- We use **continuous tenses** to refer to the **unfulfilled result** of the action in the **if**-clause. It expresses this result as an **unfinished or continuous action**.



If he **hadn't accepted** the job in London, he **would have been working** in Amsterdam now.

If she **had passed** her exams, she **would have been studying** her Master's this year.





Using continuous tenses and the third conditional

Match the *if* clauses (1-4) to the correct *would* clause (a-d).

Example: If I **had known** it was important, I **would have been listening** much more carefully.

1. If the removal company had arrived, ...

a. I / social / a lot more

2. If the weather had been better recently, ...

b. he / win / the match / now

3. If I had managed to get the week off work, ...

c. we / move in / to our new home / by now

4. If Federer had won that point, ...

d. I / fly / to Ibiza / today



Mixed conditionals – third + second

- *If* + subject + past perfect, + subject + *would* + bare infinitive.



If you **hadn't made** such a mess in the office, the cleaners **would be** finished by now.

If I **had left** work earlier, I **would not be** stuck in this traffic.





Mixed conditionals – third + second

- The **third + second mixed conditional** communicates:
 - A **present result** of a **past condition**.

<i>If</i> + past perfect (third conditional)	<i>would</i> + present infinitive (second conditional)	Meaning
If I had been born in Paris , I would be a Parisian.		I wasn't born in Paris, so I am not a Parisian (but I would be if I was born in Paris).
If you had taken my advice , you would be happy.		You didn't take my advice, but you would be happy if you had.
If she had already arrived , I would be able to see her.		I know she hasn't arrived yet. When she arrives, I will be able to see her .



Mixed conditionals – second + third

- *If* + subject + past simple, + subject + *would* + *have* + past participle.



If you **were** less noisy, the baby **would** not **have woken** up.

If we **had more time**, you definitely **would have confessed**!





Mixed conditionals – second + third

- The second + third mixed conditional communicates:
 - A **past result** of a **present** or **continuing condition**.

<i>If + past simple</i> (second conditional)	<i>would + have + past participle</i> (third conditional)	Meaning
If you were a real friend , you would have helped me.		But you didn't help me because you aren't a real friend
If you were good at your job , we wouldn't have fired you.		But you are bad at your job, so we did fire you
If he wasn't such a good surfer , he would have hated Australia.		But he is a good surfer, so he enjoyed Australia



Transform the below into mixed conditional sentences.

1. You are noisy. The baby woke up last night.



If you weren't so noisy, the baby would not have woken up last night.

2. I am always disorganised. I lost my keys and phone.



3. You did not call your mother on her birthday. She's angry now.



4. She did not book her plane tickets earlier. The flight home is very expensive.



5. She did not study medicine. She is not a doctor.





Build mixed conditional sentences using these prompts

If I had not started
learning English...

If I did more sport...

If I had grown up in a
different country...

If I had a private
plane...



Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no





Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



If you have time, go over
the most difficult slides again



Answer key (1/2)

Activity p. 7
1. b, 2. b, 3. c, 4. a

Activity p. 13
1. c, 2. a, 3. c, 4. d

Activity p. 14
1. If I **had not heard**
2. I **would not have made** any friends.
3. I **would have had** a very different experience.
4. I **would have travelled** more.
5. Even if I **had driven** for eight hours



Answer key (2/2)

Exercise p. 22

2. If I wasn't so disorganised, I would not have lost my keys and phone.
3. If you had called your mother on her birthday, she would not be angry right now.
4. If she had booked her flight earlier, the flight home would not be so expensive.
5. If she had studied medicine, she would now be a doctor.

Exercise p. 17

1c, 2a, 3d, 4b

Exercise p. 15

2. He did not work hard; he did not get a promotion.
3. She did travel to California; she saw the giant redwoods.
4. You did leave the dog at home alone; the dog chewed up my shoes.
5. You did not read the book; you did not enjoy the film.





Can you identify which conditional is which? Sort each of the sentences below into the correct list.

a. If I had brought sunscreen, I would not be so sunburned.

b. If you had introduced yourself when you moved in, we would have met sooner.

c. If he was better at English, he might have studied at a university in the UK.

d. If you came to work on time, our boss would be happier.

e. If we'd had more time in France, we could have visited Versailles.

f. If he had taken out the rubbish, the house would not smell so bad.

g. If I was not so afraid of sharks, I would have gone scuba diving.

h. If you took a cooking class, what would you want to make?

i. If I'd more time to plan the party, it would have been a more elegant affair.

j. I might have got a job there if I had actually applied.

k. If more people donated to charity, we could solve so many problems.

l. If we had chosen better seats, we would have seen more of the game.

second conditional

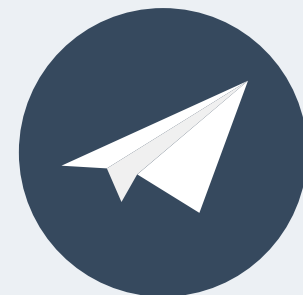
third conditional

mixed conditional



Fill in the missing clause to build a complete third conditional or mixed conditional sentences.

If she had not gone to university.	_____
_____	he would not have won the lottery.
If you had realised how much you loved teaching	_____
_____	she would have missed the exciting opportunity.
If you had spoken with your manager	_____
_____	we would not have seen that a beautiful sunset.
If I were a better cook	_____
_____	I could travel around the world
If he was friendlier	_____





Homework answer key

Exercise p. 30
Second conditional:
h, d, k
Third conditional:
b, e, i, j, l
Mixed conditional:
a, c, f, g



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