

11.1 Sentences with *if* – unreal past conditional

GR11.1)))

- 1 If the bank robber **had escaped**, he **wouldn't have gone** to prison.
- 2 The burglar **might have escaped** if the alarm **hadn't gone off**.

We use the unreal past conditional to talk about unreal situations in the past. We use it to talk about situations or events that are contrary to, or the opposite of, what actually happened.

- **If + past perfect would have + past participle**
*If you **had locked** the car, no one **would have stolen** it.*
 (You didn't lock the car, so it was stolen.)
*If he'd **been caught**, he **wouldn't have been able to commit** any more crimes.* (He wasn't caught, so he was able to commit more crimes.)
*If the police **had arrived** five minutes earlier, they **would have caught** the burglar.*

The *if*-clause and the result clause can usually go in either order. When the *if*-clause is first, it is followed by a comma. When the result clause comes first, there is no comma.
If I'd seen you, I would have said hello.
I would have said hello if I'd seen you.

- We can also use the modal verbs *could* and *might* instead of *would*.
*If the police had arrived five minutes earlier, they **might** have caught the burglar.*
*If we'd left earlier, we **could** have stopped off on the way.*

In informal spoken English and in informal writing (e.g. *social media*), we usually contract *had* and *would* to 'd, especially after pronouns. We sometimes also contract *have* to 've.
*If I'd seen anything, I **would've** told you.*

- 1 Complete the unreal past conditional sentences in the conversations with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.
 - 1 A Sorry we're late. We got stuck in traffic.
 B Well, if you'd set off (set off) earlier, you would've missed (miss) the heavy traffic. I did warn you.
 - 2 A Was the thief who burgled you arrested?
 B No. There wasn't enough evidence. They _____ (arrest) him if they _____ (find) the things he'd stolen.
 - 3 A Did you get the job?
 B No, I didn't bother applying.
 A Oh, I'm sure you _____ (get) the job if you _____ (apply) for it.
 - 4 A I see you didn't manage to clean the kitchen.
 B Well, if you _____ (ask) me earlier, I _____ (can/clean) it. But I was too busy, sorry.
 - 5 A I thought you and Johann had met a few years ago.
 B No, I don't think so. I'm sure I _____ (remember) if I _____ (met) him before. I didn't recognize him at all.
- 2 Rewrite the summary with conditional sentences to show how things might have been different.
 Johnny didn't work hard at school. → He failed all his exams. → He didn't get a job. → He had no money. → He went back to school. → He went to university. → He got a good job.
 - 1 If Johnny had worked hard at school, he wouldn't have failed all his exams.
 - 2 If he hadn't failed his exams, _____
 - 3 If _____
 - 4 If _____
 - 5 If _____
 - 6 If _____
- 3 Write an unreal past conditional sentence for each story about how things might have been different.
 - 1 A nineteen-year-old man stole \$200 from a shop. A few days later he saw a security camera photo in a local newspaper and showed it to his mother. She contacted the police and he was arrested.
If he hadn't shown the picture to his mother, she wouldn't have contacted the police.
 - 2 A man was robbing a shop in Madrid in Spain and he pulled a bag out of his pocket to put the money in. He pulled out his ID card at the same time by mistake. It fell on the floor. An hour later he was arrested.

 - 3 A man robbed a shop and jumped onto a bus to escape. He didn't have the correct money to pay for a ticket, so he got back off the bus and was arrested by a policeman who was passing by.

11.2 *should/shouldn't have*

GR11.2))

- 1 You really **should have contacted** me sooner about the problem.
- 2 They **shouldn't have spent** so much money on a holiday.
- 3 Who **should we have told** about the change of arrangements for the meeting?
- 4 They **shouldn't have taken** the money.

We use *should have* or *shouldn't have* + past participle to criticize things we or other people did or didn't do in the past and to say what was the correct or better thing to have done.

*I **should have waited** before I sent the email.*

*She **should never have posted** the letter.*

*You **shouldn't have said** anything to him. He's really upset now.*

*I didn't know what to do. In your opinion, what **should I have done**?*

In spoken English, we usually contract *have to* to 've.
*We **should've** waited a little longer.*
*You **shouldn't've** said anything.*

- 1 Read the situations and write what was the correct or better thing to have done in each situation, using *shouldn't have*. Begin with the words given.
 - 1 In 2000, millions of people received an email with the subject line 'I love you'. Opening the email was a mistake as it activated one of the worst computer viruses, the 'Love Bug' virus, which infected over fifty million computers around the world.
 People *shouldn't have opened the email.* _____
 - 2 A few years ago, an employee of an insurance company started a rumour via email that another company had serious financial problems. The other company saw the email and took the company that had started the rumour to court. They received £450,000.
 The employee _____
 - 3 A CEO of an international company criticized 400 of his employees by email. The email became public and the value of the company fell by almost 30%.
 The CEO _____
 - 4 In 2010, a fourteen-year-old girl posted on Facebook that she was having a party. 21,000 people clicked that they were going to attend. Her parents cancelled the party.
 The girl _____
 - 5 In 2009, the University of California emailed 46,000 applicants and told them they were accepted as students of the university. The university had accidentally sent the email to all the applicants rather than just to the successful applicants.
 The university _____
- 2 Look at the things Dmitry did and didn't do when he went for a job interview. Write what was the correct or better thing to have done, using *should have* or *shouldn't have*.
 He didn't have a shave. He wore jeans and a T-shirt. He didn't arrive on time. He kept looking at his phone. He didn't ask any questions. He didn't say goodbye.
 - 1 *He **should have had a shave.*** _____
 - 2 _____
 - 3 _____
 - 4 _____
 - 5 _____
 - 6 _____