

12.1 Conditional sentences to talk about unreal situations

GR12.1))

- 1 If we **had** a car, we **would drive** there.
- 2 You **could apply** for the job **if** you **had** the qualifications.
- 3 **If** he'd left on time, he **wouldn't have missed** the flight.
- 4 They **could have won** the match **if** the referee **hadn't given** the last penalty to the opposition.

We can use conditional sentences to express something unreal, imaginary or hypothetical and to say how things could be or could have been different.

- To talk about an unreal or improbable situation in the present and future we use *if* + past tense + *would/might/could* + infinitive. This structure is sometimes called a 'second conditional'.

*If we had more time, we'd stay a bit longer.
I'd email you if the internet was working.*

We can generally use *was* or *were* with *I/he/she/it* in an *if*-clause.

If I was/were younger, I'd learn to surf.

However, we only use *were* in the phrase *if I were you, ...*

If I were you, I'd talk to your parents. NOT *if I was you, I'd ...*

- To talk about an unreal situation in the past, we use *if* + past perfect + *would have* + past participle. This structure is sometimes called a 'third conditional'.

I'm sure if he'd known about the meeting, he would've gone to it.

I would've said hello if I'd seen you.

- We can connect the past and the present by mixing the second and third conditionals. These structures are sometimes called 'mixed conditional'.
- To talk about an unreal situation in the past which has a present result, we use *if* + past perfect + *would* + infinitive.

If you'd had some breakfast, you wouldn't be so hungry now.

- To talk about the possible past result of an unreal situation in the present, we use *if* + past tense + *would have* + past participle.

If I had more money, I would have bought it.

- We can use other modal verbs, particularly *could* and *might* in the main clause.

If we'd got up earlier, we might not have missed the bus.

We could go for a walk if it wasn't raining.

If you'd been listening, you might know what to do.

Note that we often contract *would* and *had* to 'd and we often contract *have* to 've. Also note that the *if*-clause and the main clause can go in either order.

If I had more money, I'd get a bigger apartment.

I would've told you if I'd known.

Where the *if*-clause is first, we need a comma. If it is second in the sentence, we do not use a comma.

If I knew the answers, I would tell you.

I would tell you if I knew the answer.

- 1 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense or form.

1 A If we _____ (not/have) children, we _____ (have) a lot more free time.

B You _____ (have) a lot more money as well!

2 A Where _____ (you/live) if you _____ (can/live) anywhere?

B I'm not sure, but ideally it _____ (be) somewhere by the sea.

3 A We called at your house earlier, but you weren't at home.

B That's a shame. If I _____ (know) you were coming, I _____ (stay) in.

4 A How many children do you think you'll have?

B Well, if I _____ (can/choose), I _____ (have) two girls and a boy.

5 A Did you hear that Chris failed his final exams?

B Well, if he _____ (spend) more time studying instead of partying, I'm sure he _____ (pass) them.

6 A A colleague at work is really getting on my nerves.

What _____ (you/do) if you _____ (be) in my position?

B If I _____ (be) you, I _____ (talk) to him or her about it.

- 2 For each situation, write a conditional sentence to say how the situation could be or could have been different.

1 I missed the bus, so I was late for work.

If I hadn't missed the bus, I wouldn't have been late for work.

2 You're feeling tired now because you went to bed late last night.

3 Alina isn't here tomorrow, so she can't help us.

4 We can't get in the house because you lost the key!

5 Gabby didn't go to the meeting because she didn't know about it.

6 You weren't listening, so you don't know what to do.

7 I don't have your number, so I couldn't call you last night.

8 The internet isn't working, so I can't send them the photos.

12.2 wish and if only

GR12.2)))

- 1 I wish I **could run** faster.
- 2 She wishes she **had** a car; then she wouldn't have to use the bus.
- 3 I wish I **hadn't said** anything – now you're angry.
- 4 The students **wish their lecturers would give** them fewer assignments.
- 5 If only she **hadn't taken** the diamond ring, then she **wouldn't have been arrested**.

We use *wish* to say that we want things to be different from how they are or were.

- To talk about the present, we use *wish* + past tense.
*She wishes she **was** a bit older.*
*I wish I **could** play a musical instrument.*
*I wish it **wasn't raining**.*
- To express regrets about the past, we use *wish* + past perfect.
*I wish I **hadn't eaten** so much.*
*I think Jim wishes he'd **studied** a bit more for the exam.*
- We use *wish* + person/thing + *would* to talk about things we want to happen or change in the future. We often use this structure to express annoyance or dissatisfaction.
*I **wish it would stop** raining.*
*I think he **wishes his boss would be** a bit more flexible.*
- Note that *would* cannot have the same subject and object.
NOT *I wish I would be richer.*
- We can use *if only* instead of *wish* in all these situations. *If only* is generally more emphatic than *wish*.
***If only** we had more time.*
***If only** I had spoken to him!*
- We can also sometimes include a second clause after *if only*.
***If only** it wasn't raining, **we could go for a walk**.*

- 1 Choose the correct options to complete the wishes and regrets.
 - 1 I imagine they wish they *had* / *would have* a bigger house.
 - 2 I wish I *had* / *would have* the courage to ask Rachel out on a date.
 - 3 I wish it *stopped* / *would stop* raining. I want to go outside.
 - 4 I hate my job. If only I *chose* / *had chosen* a different career path.
 - 5 I wish my sister *settled down* / *would settle down* and have kids soon.
 - 6 If only I *didn't turn down* / *hadn't turned down* that job offer last week.

- 2 Jane is in a boring lecture at university. Write what she is thinking using *I wish* and the words given.
 - 1 the lecture/be/more interesting

 - 2 I/not be/here

 - 3 I/can/go home

 - 4 the lecturer/involve/the students more

 - 5 I/enjoy/being a student

 - 6 I/not choose/to study this subject

- 3 Rephrase the sentences so the meaning is similar, using the word(s) in italics.
 - 1 She regrets not speaking to Michael last night. (*wish*)

 - 2 It's a real shame that you can't come with us. (*if only*)

 - 3 It would be great to have a bit more money. (*wish*)

 - 4 I imagine Karl regrets saying all those things. (*wish*)

 - 5 It's a pity we don't know his address. (*if only*)

 - 6 I really want him to call me. (*wish*)
