



Use

- We use the **second conditional** to talk about situations in the present or future that are impossible or unlikely.

*I can't come with you on the demonstration. But **if I didn't have** football practice, **I'd come** with you.*

- We use the **third conditional** to talk about situations in the past that didn't happen.

***If you had told me** about the demonstration, **I would have cancelled** football practice.*



Form

- We form **second conditional** sentences with an **if** clause and a result clause:

If clause (If + past simple) + result clause (would + verb).

| Second conditional | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| If clause | | Result clause | | |
| If | past simple | would | verb | |
| If | I knew the answer, | I would | tell | you. |
| | I forgot to tidy my room, | my parents wouldn't | be | pleased. |
| | you had lots of money, | would you | travel | around the world? |

Tip

In second conditional sentences, we sometimes use the subjunctive form *were* (instead of *was*) after *I / he / she / it*. For example, we often use the phrase *If I were you* to give advice:

*If I **were** you, I'd do more exercise.*

Tip

We can start conditional sentences with the *if* clause OR the result clause. When we start with the *if* clause, we usually put a comma after it.

If I won the prize, I would be very happy.

I would be very happy if I won the prize.

- We also form **third conditional** sentences with an **if** clause and a result clause:

If clause (If + past perfect) + result clause (would have + past participle).

| Third conditional | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| If clause | | Result clause | | |
| If | past perfect | would have | past participle | |
| If | they'd come to the club, | they would have | enjoyed | it. |
| | John had worked harder, | he wouldn't have | failed | the test. |
| | you'd missed the train, | what would you have | done? | |

**Tip**

We can use the modal verbs *might* or *could* instead of *would* in conditional sentences.

We use *might* if we are not sure of the result:

*The accident **might not have happened** if he had been more careful.*

We use *could* to say that something would be possible:

*If you practised every day, you **could become** a good musician.*

Tip

We can use *even if* or *unless* in the *if* clause of conditional sentences.

Even if means 'despite the possibility that':

*I don't like that jacket. I wouldn't buy it **even if** it was half price.*

Unless means 'if not' or 'except if':

*We wouldn't go to Mark's party **unless** he invited us.*

Tip

Remember that, in second conditional sentences, we often use 'd as the short form of *would*. In third conditional sentences, we often use 'd as the short form of *had*.

If I could, I'd travel all around the world. ('d = would)

If she'd found out about the concert earlier, she would have bought tickets. ('d = had)