

Present Conditionals

Present Real Conditional

FORMATION:

**[If / When ... Simple Present ..., ... Simple Present ...]
[... Simple Present ... if / when ... Simple Present ...]**

USE:

The Present Real Conditional is used to talk about what you normally do in real-life situations.

Examples:

- If I go to a friend's house for dinner, I usually take a bottle of wine or some flowers.
- When I have a day off from work, I often go to the beach.
- If the weather is nice, she walks to work.
- Jerry helps me with my homework when he has time.
- I read if there is nothing on TV.
- If I have money I buy candies.

Present Unreal Conditional

FORMATION:

[If ... Simple Past ..., ... would + verb ...]

[... would + verb ... if ... Simple Past ...]

USE:

The Present Unreal Conditional is used to talk about what you would generally do in imaginary situations.

Examples:

- If I had a car, I would drive to work.
But I don't have a car.
- She would travel around the world if she had more money.
But she doesn't have much money.
- I would read more if I didn't watch so much TV.

But I do watch TV a lot.

- Mary would move to Japan if she spoke Japanese.

But she doesn't.

- If they worked harder, they would earn more money.

But they don't work hard.

- If I had money, I would buy candies.

But I don't have money.

EXCEPTION Conditional with Modal Verbs

There are some special conditional forms for modal verbs in English:

would + can = could

would + shall = should

would + may = might

The words "can," "shall" and "may" cannot be used with "would." Instead, they must be used in these special forms.

Past Conditionals

Past Real Conditional

FORMATION:

[If / When ... Simple Past ..., ... Simple Past ...]

[... Simple Past... if / when ... Simple Past ...]

USE:

The Past Real Conditional describes what you used to do in particular real-life situations. It suggests that your habits have changed and you do not usually do these things today.

Examples:

- If I went to a friend's house for dinner, I usually took a bottle of wine or some flowers.

I don't do that anymore.

- When I had a day off from work, I often went to the beach.

Now, I never get time off.

- If the weather was nice, she often walked to work.

Now, she usually drives.

- Jerry always helped me with my homework when he had time.
But he doesn't do that anymore.
- If I had money I bought candies.
I no longer buy candy.

Past Unreal Conditional

FORMATION:

[If ... Past Perfect ..., ... would have + past participle ...]

[... would have + past participle ... if ... Past Perfect ...]

USE:

The Past Unreal Conditional is used to talk about imaginary situations in the past. You can describe what you would have done differently or how something could have happened differently if circumstances had been different.

Examples:

- If I had owned a car, I would have driven to work.
But I didn't own one, so I took the bus.
- She would have traveled around the world if she had had more money.
But she didn't have much money, so she never traveled.
- I would have read more as a child if I hadn't watched so much TV.
Unfortunately, I did watch a lot of TV, so I never read for entertainment.
- Mary would have gotten the job and moved to Japan if she had studied Japanese in school instead of French.
But she didn't.
- If Jack had worked harder, he would have earned more money.
Unfortunately, he was lazy and he didn't earn much.
- If I had had money, I would have bought candies.
But I never had much money so I couldn't have bought candy.

Future Conditionals

Future Real Conditional

FORMATION:

[If / When ... Simple Present ..., ... Simple Future ...]

[... Simple Future ... if / when ... Simple Present ...]

Notice that there is no future in the if- or when-clause.

USE:

The Future Real Conditional describes what you think you will do in a specific situation in the future. It is different from other Real Conditional forms because, unlike the present or the past, you do not know what will happen in the future. Although this form is called "real", you are usually imagining or guessing about the future. It is called "real" because it is still possible that the action might occur in the future. Carefully study the following examples and compare them to the Future Unreal Conditional examples further down the page.

Examples:

- If I go to my friend's house for dinner tonight, I will take a bottle of wine or some flowers.

I am still not sure if I will go to his house or not.

- When I have a day off from work, I am going to go to the beach.

I have to wait until I have a day off.

- If the weather is nice, she is going to walk to work.

It depends on the weather.

- Jerry will help me with my homework when he has time.

I have to wait until he has time.

- I am going to read if there is nothing on TV.

It depends on the TV schedule.

- If I have money, I will buy candies.

It depends on my budget.

Future Unreal Conditional

FORMATION: [1]

[If ... Simple Past ..., ... would + verb ...]

[... would + verb ... if ... Simple Past ...]

Notice that this form looks the same as Present Unreal Conditional.

USE:

The Future Unreal Conditional is used to talk about imaginary situations in the future. It is not as common as the Future Real Conditional because English speakers often leave open the possibility that anything MIGHT happen in the future. It is only used when a speaker needs to emphasize that something is impossible. Because this form looks like Present Unreal Conditional, many native speakers prefer Form 2 described below.

Examples:

- If I had a day off from work next week, I would go to the beach.
I won't have a day off from work.
- I am busy next week. If I had time, I would come to your party.
I won't have time.
- Jerry would help me with my homework tomorrow if he didn't have to work.
He will have to work tomorrow.
- If I had money I would buy candies.
But I won't have money.

FORMATION: [2]

[If ... were + present participle ..., ... would be + present participle ...]

[... would be + present participle ... if ... were + present participle ...]

USE:

Form 2 of the Future Unreal Conditional is also used to talk about imaginary situations in the future. Native speakers often prefer this form over Form 1 to emphasize that the conditional form is in the future rather than the present. Also notice in the examples below that this form can be used in the if-clause, the result, or both parts of the sentence.

Examples:

- If I were going to Fiji next week, I would be taking my scuba diving gear with me.
I am not going to go to Fiji and I am not going to take my scuba gear with me.
- If I were not visiting my grandmother tomorrow, I would help you study.
I am going to visit my grandmother tomorrow.

- If I had time, I would be coming to your party.
But I am busy next week and therefore I am not going to your party.
- If I had money, I would be buying candies.
But I won't have money so I won't be buying anything.

FORMATION: [3]

[If ... were going to + verb ..., ... would be + present participle ...]

[... would be + present participle ... if ... were going to + verb ...]

USE:

Form 3 of the Future Unreal Conditional is a variation of Form 2 which is also used to talk about imaginary situations in the future. Notice that this form is only different from Form 2 in the if-clause. Native speakers use Form 3 to emphasize that the conditional form is a plan or prediction in the same way "be going to" is used to indicate a plan or prediction.

Examples:

- If I were going to go to Fiji next week, I would be taking my scuba diving gear with me.
I am not going to go to Fiji and I am not going to take my scuba gear with me.
- If I were not going to visit my grandmother tomorrow, I would help you study.
I am going to visit my grandmother tomorrow.

The most common ones:

If I have money, I will buy a car.

If + simple present,....will + verb...

If I had money, I would buy a car.

If + simple past.....would + verb...

If I had had money, I would have bought a car.

If + past perfect.....would + present perfect