

Unreal conditionals

B2 level

Second conditional: Unreal or hypothetical situations (Present or Future)

Form: If + **past simple** / **Past Continuous**,
would / could / might + base verb

With the verb '**to be**' you can use: **was / were** for I / (s)he in the If-clause. "**Were**" is more formal or traditional (used in writing and formal speech).

However, ***If I were you...*** to give **advice**, **ALWAYS 'were'**.

Use: To talk about unreal or hypothetical situations in the present or future.

Example:

*If **there was** a fire in this hotel, it **would / could / might** be very difficult to escape.*

*If it **wasn't raining** so hard, we **could** go shopping.*

*If I **was / were** rich, I **would** retire young.*

*If I **were** you, I **would** try scuba diving to destress.*

Third conditional: Impossible situations in the past

Form: If + **Past Perfect Simple / Past Perfect Continuous**, **would / could / might** + **have** + past participle

Use: To talk about things that didn't happen

because a condition wasn't met (unreal past).

A hypothetical situation in the past that didn't happen:
Imagine a different past.

Example:

• *If I **had had** a mobile phone, I **would / could / might have called** you.*

(I didn't have a phone, so I couldn't call)

Compare:

*If you **came** to class more often, you **would** probably pass the exam. (you need to come more often to pass)*

*If you **had come** to class more often, you **would have** probably **passed** the exam. (you didn't come to class enough so you failed)*