

WOULD RATHER/ WOULD PREFER/ HAD BETTER

WOULD RATHER

1) When the person himself expresses a preference on something referring to the present or future:

Subject + would rather + base form of verb

I would rather (I'd rather) stay at home than go out right now.

2) When referring to the past:

Subject + would rather + have + past participle form of verb

I would rather (I'd rather) have stayed at home than (have) gone out last night.

3) When the person expresses a preference on someone else's actions referring to the present or future:

Subject + would rather + object + past tense

I would rather (I'd rather) you gave up smoking.

I would rather (I'd rather) you didn't smoke in the car.

I'd rather you took a taxi (instead of walking) – it's not safe on the streets at night.

The film is quite violent. I'd rather our children didn't watch it

4) When referring to the past:

Subject + would rather ('d rather) + object + past perfect

I would rather (I'd rather) you hadn't lied to me about your school marks yesterday.

WOULD PREFER

1) When the person himself expresses a preference on something referring to the present or future:

Subject + would prefer + to infinitive + verb

I would prefer (I'd prefer) to watch TV rather than (to) do shopping.

2) When referring to the past:

Subject + would prefer ('d prefer) to + have + past participle form of a verb

I would prefer (I'd prefer) to have been born somewhere else.

3) When the person expresses a preference on someone else's actions referring to the present or future:

Subject + would prefer ('d prefer) + object + to infinitive + verb

I would prefer (I'd prefer) my son to live with me rather than (to) live abroad.

4) When referring to the past:

Subject + would prefer ('d prefer) + object + to + have + past participle form of a verb

I would prefer your daughter to have accepted my apology rather than (to have) ignored me last night.

When we speak about a specific preference (our preference now), WOULD RATHER and WOULD PREFER have the same meaning and are interchangeable.

- “*We went to the theatre yesterday; today I would rather go to the cinema.*” Would rather can be abbreviated to 'd rather.
- “*We went to the theatre yesterday; today I would prefer to go to the cinema*”. Would prefer can be abbreviated to 'd prefer:

WOULD RATHER is followed by the INFINITIVE WITHOUT TO.

WOULD PREFER is followed by **TO + INFINITIVE OR A NOUN**:

- I'd rather have fruit juice.
- I'd prefer to have fruit juice.
- I'd prefer fruit juice. (noun, no verb)

We say would rather . . . **THAN**.

We say would prefer . . . **RATHER THAN** or would prefer . . . **INSTEAD OF**:

- *It's such nice weather – I'd rather sit in the garden than watch TV.*
- *It's such nice weather – I'd prefer to sit in the garden rather than watch TV.*
- *It's such nice weather – I'd prefer to sit in the garden instead of watching TV.*

We say **PREFER . . . TO**, but **WOULD RATHER . . . THAN**:

- I prefer walking to driving.
- I'd rather walk than drive

'D BETTER

Note that 'D BETTER, which is similar structurally to 'd rather, is used to suggest **NECESSARY ACTION**. In this case however, 'd is the abbreviated form of **had**, not would. Like 'd rather, 'd better is followed by the bare infinitive without to. Study the following:

- *We'd better not be late for the Ambassador's party. It would be unforgivable to arrive late.*
- *You'd better phone him and tell him that you're not going.*
- *They'd better buy me a Christmas present or I shall never forgive them.*

Note that it is sometimes slightly threatening in tone, as in the last example. **HAD BETTER** is always more urgent than should or ought to and has the same force as **I WOULD ADVISE YOU STRONGLY TO.... OR WE MUST / WE MUSTN'T....**

LINKS: https://www.englishrevealed.co.uk/fce_grammar.php
<https://www.test-english.com/grammar-points/b1-b2/would-rather-would-prefer/>