

6.2 Second Conditional

We use Second Conditional sentences to talk about:

- imaginary situations in the present:
*If I **were** rich, I **would** live in a huge house.*
*If Kate **didn't** leave home before rush hour, she **wouldn't** arrive at the office on time.*
- improbable events in the future:
*If he **left** home earlier, he **would never be** late for work.*
*If I **weren't** so tall, I **would become** a figure skater.*

We use the Past Simple in the *if*-clause and *would/wouldn't* in the clause describing the result.

As in First Conditional sentences, the clauses can be in either order. We put a comma at the end of the *if*-clause if it comes first in the sentence.

If + Past Simple (condition),	would / wouldn't + infinitive (result).
If Sue knew Italian,	she'd apply for this job.

would / wouldn't + infinitive (result)	if + Past Simple (condition).
Sue would apply for this job	if she knew Italian.

In Second Conditional sentences we use *was* or *were* after *I*, *he*, *she* and *it*. *Were* is more formal.

Remember to use *were* in **If I were you**:

If I were you, I would tell him the truth.

1 Match the sentence halves.

- If I were a bit taller,
 - Would your uncle know what to do
 - They'd get access to your computer
 - Of course I would take a car to work
 - If we didn't have to look for a summer job,
- if they knew the password.
 - we would be on a sunny beach now.
 - I could be a fashion model.
 - if I had one.
 - if he lost his job?

2 Choose the correct option.

What would you do if you ¹*are / were / be* me? I'm a shop assistant, but if I ²*hadn't / wouldn't have / didn't have* a job, I ³*like / liked / would like* to go travelling all year round. But of course, no work means no money. If somebody ⁴*offered / would offer / did offer* me a job in which I could earn money and travel, however, I ⁵*would take / took / had taken* it without thinking! Maybe I should apply for a job as a flight attendant?

3 Choose three to five words from each set to complete the sentence below it.

- were, would, for, a, be, apply, she, applied*
If she were older, she _____ a job in a clothes shop.
- brother, did, would, I, when, a, have, had*
I would never be lonely if _____ or sister.
- afford, afforded, will, could, house, a, can, big*
If we _____, we'd have lots of parties.
- time, didn't, she, have, hadn't, any, wouldn't*
If Sue worked long hours, _____ to go out with friends.

4 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets. Use the Second Conditional.

- If everybody _____ (go) to university, nobody _____ (want) to do hard physical work.
- Buses _____ (not be) so crowded if more people _____ (work) from home.
- If people _____ (not apply) for low-paid jobs, salaries _____ (go) up.
- Family relationships _____ (improve) if parents _____ (spend) more time with their children.
- You _____ (be) happier if you _____ (have) an interesting and well-paid job.
- You _____ (get) the sack if you _____ (go) to work late every day.
- If he _____ (not have) a full-time job, he _____ (spend) more time on his hobbies.
- If I _____ (work) overtime, I _____ (earn) more money.

5 Rewrite the sentences using the Second Conditional.

- I don't earn money because I am unemployed.

- Sue doesn't have a boss because she's self-employed.

- Ian sleeps during the day because he works night shifts.

- We have to work outdoors because we're builders.

- Jim isn't happy because he is badly paid.

- Abigail has eight weeks of holiday because she is a teacher.

- Max comes up with good ideas because he's creative.

- I won't apply for the job because I don't have enough experience.
