

Mixed Conditionals

Those of you who have been following the Conditional Tutorial should now be familiar with present, past and future conditional verb forms. Sometimes Unreal Conditional sentences are mixed.

This means that the time in the if-clause is not the same as the time in the result. Study the examples below to learn how to mix conditional verb forms like a native speaker.

Verbs in green are in the Present Unreal Conditional.

Verbs in red are in the Past Unreal Conditional.

Verbs in purple are in the Future Unreal Conditional.

• *Mixed Conditional Patterns*

PAST

PRESENT

- **Examples:**
- If I **had won** the lottery, I **would be** rich.
But I didn't win the lottery in the past and I am not rich now.
- If I **had taken** French in high school, I **would have** more job opportunities.
But I didn't take French in high school and I don't have many job opportunities.
- If she **had been born** in the United States, she **wouldn't need** a visa to work here.
But she wasn't born in the United States and she does need a visa now to work here.

PAST

FUTURE

- Examples:
- If she **had signed** up for the ski trip last week, she **would be joining** us tomorrow.
But she didn't sign up for the ski trip last week and she isn't going to join us tomorrow.
- If Mark **had gotten** the job instead of Joe, he **would be moving** to Shanghai.
But Mark didn't get the job and Mark is not going to move to Shanghai.
- If Darren **hadn't wasted** his Christmas bonus gambling in Las Vegas, he **would go** to Mexico with us next month.
But Darren wasted his Christmas bonus gambling in Las Vegas and he won't go to Mexico with us next month.

PRESENT

PAST

- Examples:
- If I **were** rich, I **would have bought** that Ferrari we saw yesterday.
But I am not currently rich and that is why I didn't buy the Ferrari yesterday.
- If Sam **spoke** Russian, he **would have translated** the letter for you.
But Sam doesn't speak Russian and that is why he didn't translate the letter.
- If I **didn't have** to work so much, I **would have gone** to the party last night.
But I have to work a lot and that is why I didn't go to the party last night.

PRESENT

FUTURE

- Examples:
- If I **didn't have** so much vacation time, I **wouldn't go** with you on the cruise to Alaska next week.
But I do have a lot of vacation time and I will go on the trip next week.
- If Cindy **were** more creative, the company **would send** her to New York to work on the new advertising campaign.
But Cindy is not creative and the company won't send her to New York to work on the new campaign.
- If Dan **weren't** so nice, he **wouldn't be tutoring** you in math tonight.
But Dan is nice and he is going to tutor you tonight.

FUTURE

PAST

- Examples:
- If I **weren't going** on my business trip next week, I **would have accepted** that new assignment at work.
But I am going to go on a business trip next week, and that is why I didn't accept that new assignment at work.
- If my parents **weren't coming** this weekend, I **would have planned** a nice trip just for the two of us to Napa Valley.
But my parents are going to come this weekend, and that is why I didn't plan a trip for the two of us to Napa Valley.
- If Donna **weren't making** us a big dinner tonight, I **would have suggested** that we go to that nice Italian restaurant.
But she is going to make us a big dinner tonight, and that is why I didn't suggest that we go to that nice Italian restaurant.

FUTURE

PRESENT

- Examples:
- If I **were going** to that concert tonight, I **would be** very excited.
But I am not going to go to that concert tonight and that is why I am not excited.
- If Sandy **were giving** a speech tomorrow, she **would be** very nervous.
But Sandy is not going to give a speech tomorrow and that is why she is not nervous.
- If Seb **didn't come** with us to the desert, everyone **would be** very disappointed.
But Seb will come with us to the desert and that is why everyone is so happy