

## Conditional Sentences 3:

### The Second Conditional = It probably won't ever happen

The Second Conditional describes an unreal possibility or dream. The **second conditional** is like the first conditional. We are still thinking about the future. We are thinking about a particular condition in the future, and the result of this condition. But there is **not** a real possibility that this condition will happen. For example, you do **not** have a lottery ticket. Is it possible to win? No! No lottery ticket, no win! But maybe you will buy a lottery ticket in the future. So you can think about winning in the future, like a dream. It's not very real, but it's still possible.

- | IF   | condition         | result             |
|------|-------------------|--------------------|
|      | past simple       | WOULD + main verb  |
| • If | I won the lottery | I would buy a car. |

Notice that we are thinking about a future condition. We use the past simple tense to talk about the future condition. We use WOULD + main verb to talk about the future result. The important thing about the second conditional is that **there is an unreal possibility that the condition will happen.**

Here are some more examples:

- If I married Mary I would be happy.
  - I would be happy if I married Mary.
- If John became rich she would marry him.
  - She would marry John if he became rich.
- If it snowed next July would you be surprised?
  - Would you be surprised if it snowed next July?
- If it snowed next July what would you do?
  - What would you do if it snowed next July?

Note that WOULD is **never** used in the IF clause.

- If he **came** tomorrow I **would** be very glad. (Not: If he **would come** tomorrow I **would** be very glad.)

Sometimes, we use **should**, **could** or **might** instead of **would**, for example:

- If I won a million dollars, I could stop working.

## EXERCISES

Put the verbs given in the spaces in the correct form. Two examples have been done for you

- 0 They would be rather offended if I did not go to see them. (not/go)
- 00 If you took more exercise, you would feel better. (feel)
- 1 If I was offered the job, I think I \_\_\_\_\_ it. (take)
- 2 I'm sure Amy will lend you the money. I'd be very surprised if she \_\_\_\_\_ (refuse)
- 3 If I sold my car, I \_\_\_\_\_ much money for it. (not/get)
- 4 A lot of people would be out of work if the factory \_\_\_\_\_ (close down)
- 5 What would happen if I \_\_\_\_\_ that red button? (press)
- 6 Liz gave me this ring. She \_\_\_\_\_ very upset if I lost it. (be)
- 7 Mark and Carol are expecting us. They would be disappointed if we \_\_\_\_\_ (not/ come)
- 8 Would Tim mind if I \_\_\_\_\_ his bicycle without asking him? (borrow)
- 9 If somebody \_\_\_\_\_ in here with a gun, I'd be very frightened. (walk)
- 10 I'm sure Sue \_\_\_\_\_ if you explained the situation to her. (understand)
- 11 If I \_\_\_\_\_ his number, I would phone him. (know)
- 12 I \_\_\_\_\_ that coat if I were you. (not/buy)
- 13 I \_\_\_\_\_ you if I could, but I'm afraid I can't. (help)
- 14 We would need a car if we \_\_\_\_\_ in the country. (live)
- 15 If we had the choice, we \_\_\_\_\_ in the country. (live)
- 16 This soup isn't very good. It \_\_\_\_\_ better if it wasn't so salty. (taste)
- 17 I wouldn't mind living in England if the weather \_\_\_\_\_ better. (be)
- 18 You're always tired. If you \_\_\_\_\_ to bed so late every night, you wouldn't be tired all the time. (not/go)
- 19 If I were you, I (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (not/wait). I (2) \_\_\_\_\_ now. (go)
- 20 I think there are too many cars. If there (1) \_\_\_\_\_ so many cars (not/be), there (2) \_\_\_\_\_ so much pollution. (not/be)

Now do the interactive exercises.