

# Mixed conditionals

## Introduction



If he'd taken his medicine, he'd be out of bed by now.

## Definition

Mixed conditional sentences are those that don't follow the constructions of zero, first, second or third conditionals.

## Construction

Here are the constructions of zero, first, second and third conditionals.

Type	Construction/time reference	Example
Zero	'if' + present, + present	If you heat water, it boils.
First	any time condition + any time result 'if' + present, + future	If it rains, we'll go to the cinema instead.
	future condition and future result	
Second	'if' + past, + 'would/could' + bare infinitive	If they won the lottery, they'd buy a new car.
	future condition and future result [or]	If they had more money, they would buy a new car.
	present condition and present result [or]	
	present condition and future result	If they had more money, they could buy a new car.
Third	If + past perfect, + modal + 'have' + past participle past condition and past result	If I had taken an earlier train I would not have been late for my meeting.

However, many other constructions are possible. The two most common types of mixed

## conditional are:

### 1. Third + second:

If she **had studied** harder at college, she **would have** a more interesting job.

### 2. Second + third:

If he **worked** on Saturdays, he **would not have been able to come** to the party.

## Uses and constructions

There are a lot of possible contexts for mixed conditional constructions depending on the timing of the two clauses. Here are some examples:

Time reference	Examples
Past condition and present result <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If either of them <b>had taken</b> precautions, she <b>wouldn't be</b> pregnant. [But they didn't so she is.]</p> <p><b>Would I speak</b> better French if I'd <b>been brought up</b> in France?</p> <p>Even if he <b>hadn't gone</b> on holiday he <b>wouldn't be working</b> today.</p>
Present condition and past result <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Could I have had</b> private dental treatment if I <b>had</b> premium insurance?</p> <p>If John <b>spoke</b> good English, he <b>could have moved</b> to the London office. [But he doesn't so he didn't.]</p> <p>If I <b>didn't have</b> so much work to do, I <b>would have gone</b> to the cinema last night.</p>
Past condition and future result <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If she <b>hadn't spent</b> so much in the sales, she <b>could be coming</b> with us to Miami next week. [But she did so she isn't.]</p> <p><b>Would John be moving</b> to the London office if <b>had got</b> a better score on his TOEIC?</p> <p>If you <b>hadn't concentrated</b> during the mathematics course you <b>would not be able to understand</b> next term's data analysis course.</p>
Future condition and past result <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If our Japanese counterparts <b>weren't visiting</b> tomorrow, we <b>wouldn't have had to rearrange</b> the boardroom.</p> <p>If John <b>weren't going to join</b> the London office, <b>would he have accepted</b> the position in Sweden?</p> <p>If I <b>didn't have</b> such a busy schedule next week, I <b>would have asked</b> for a holiday.</p>

**Future condition  
and present result**

If our Japanese counterparts **weren't visiting** tomorrow, we **would still need** to tidy the boardroom.

If John **were not going** to the London office, **would** he **be** as happy as he is now?

If I **didn't have** the seminar next week, I **wouldn't be** so busy today.

**Future condition  
and imperative**

If you **don't finish** that report on time, **work** through lunch - it's vitally important.

If you **see** him, **tell** him that I'm waiting for him.

If you ever **visit** the office, **don't park** in the director's space, will you?

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