

# If I do ... and If I did ...

A

Compare these examples:

(1) Lisa has lost her watch. She tells Sue:

LISA: I've lost my watch. Have you seen it anywhere?

SUE: No, but if I find it, I'll tell you.

In this example, Sue feels there is a real possibility that she will find the watch. So she says:  
if I find ... , I'll ...

(2) Joe says:

If I found a wallet in the street, I'd take it to the police station.

This is a different type of situation. Here, Joe doesn't expect to find a wallet in the street; he is *imagining* a situation that will probably not happen. So he says:

if I found ... , I'd (= I would) ... . (not if I find ... , I'll ...)

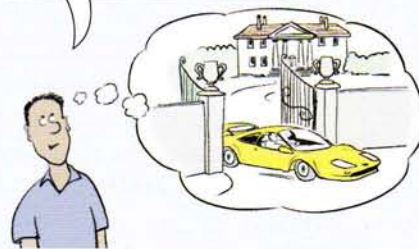
When you imagine something like this, you use *if + past* (if I found / if there was / if we didn't etc.).

But the meaning is *not* past:

- ☐ What would you do if you **won** a million pounds? (we don't really expect this to happen)
- ☐ I don't really want to go to their party, but I probably will go. They'd be upset if I **didn't** go.
- ☐ If there **was** (or **were**) an election tomorrow, who would you vote for?

For if ... was/were, see Unit 39C.

If I won a million pounds ...



B

We do not normally use **would** in the if-part of the sentence:

- ☐ I'd be very frightened if somebody **pointed** a gun at me. (not if somebody would point)
- ☐ If I **didn't** go to their party, they'd be upset. (not If I wouldn't go)

But you can use if ... **would** when you ask somebody to do something:

- ☐ (from a formal letter) I would be grateful if you **would let** me know your decision as soon as possible.

C

In the other part of the sentence (not the if-part) we use **would** ('d) / **wouldn't**:

- ☐ If you took more exercise, you'd (= you would) feel better.
- ☐ I'm not tired. If I went to bed now, I **wouldn't** sleep.
- ☐ **Would** you mind if I used your phone?

**Could** and **might** are also possible:

- ☐ If you took more exercise, you **might** feel better. (= it is possible that you would feel better)
- ☐ If it stopped raining, we **could** go out. (= we would be able to go out)

D

Do not use **when** in sentences like those on this page:

- ☐ They'd be upset if I didn't go to their party. (not when I didn't go)
- ☐ What would you do if you were bitten by a snake? (not when you were bitten)

# Exercises

# Unit 38

## 38.1 Put the verb into the correct form.

- 1 They would be offended if I didn't go to their party. (not / go)
- 2 If you took more exercise, you would feel better. (feel)
- 3 If they offered me the job, I think I ..... it. (take)
- 4 A lot of people would be out of work if the car factory ..... . (close down)
- 5 If I sold my car, I ..... much money for it. (not / get)
- 6 (*in a lift*) What would happen if somebody ..... that red button? (press)
- 7 I don't think there's any chance that Gary and Emma will get married. I'd be absolutely astonished if they ..... . (do)
- 8 Liz gave me this ring. She ..... very upset if I lost it. (be)
- 9 Dave and Kate are expecting us. They would be very disappointed if we ..... . (not / come)
- 10 Would Steve mind if I ..... his bike without asking him? (borrow)
- 11 What would you do if somebody ..... in here with a gun? (walk)
- 12 I'm sure Sue ..... if you explained the situation to her. (understand)

## 38.2 You ask a friend to imagine these situations. You ask What would you do if ... ?

- 1 (imagine – you win a lot of money)  
What would you do if you won a lot of money?
- 2 (imagine – you lose your passport)  
What .....
- 3 (imagine – there's a fire in the building)  
.....
- 4 (imagine – you're in a lift and it stops between floors)  
.....

## 38.3 Answer the questions in the way shown.

- 1 A: Shall we catch the 10.30 train?  
B: No. (arrive too early) If we caught the 10.30 train, we'd arrive too early.
- 2 A: Is Kevin going to take his driving test?  
B: No. (fail) If he .....
- 3 A: Why don't we stay at a hotel?  
B: No. (cost too much) If .....
- 4 A: Is Sally going to apply for the job?  
B: No. (not / get it) If .....
- 5 A: Let's tell them the truth.  
B: No. (not / believe us) If .....
- 6 A: Why don't we invite Bill to the party?  
B: No. (have to invite his friends too)  
.....

## 38.4 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences.

- 1 If you took more exercise, you'd feel better.
- 2 I'd be very angry if .....
- 3 If I didn't go to work tomorrow, .....
- 4 Would you go to the party if .....
- 5 If you bought some new clothes, .....
- 6 Would you mind if .....

# If I had known ... I wish I had known ...

**A** Study this example situation:

Last month Gary was in hospital for a few days. Rachel didn't know this, so she didn't go to visit him. They met a few days ago. Rachel said:

If I **had known** you were in hospital, I **would have gone** to see you.

Rachel said: If I **had known** you were in hospital ... This tells us that she *didn't* know he was in hospital.

We use **if + had ('d) ...** to talk about the past (if I **had known/been/done** etc.):

- ☐ I didn't see you when you passed me in the street. If I'd **seen** you, of course I would have said hello. (but I didn't see you)
- ☐ I decided to stay at home last night. I would have gone out if I **hadn't been** so tired. (but I was tired)
- ☐ If he **had been** looking where he was going, he wouldn't have walked into the wall. (but he wasn't looking)
- ☐ The view was wonderful. If I'd **had** a camera with me, I would have taken some photographs. (but I didn't have a camera)

Compare:

- ☐ I'm not hungry. If I **was** hungry, I would eat something. (*now*)
- ☐ I wasn't hungry. If I **had been** hungry, I would have eaten something. (*past*)

**B** Do not use **would** in the if-part of the sentence. We use **would** in the other part of the sentence:

- ☐ If I **had seen** you, I **would have said** hello. (*not* If I would have seen you)

Note that 'd can be **would** or **had**:

- ☐ If I'd **seen** you, (I'd seen = I **had** seen)  
I'd **have said** hello. (I'd have said = I **would have said**)

**C** We use **had (done)** in the same way after **wish**. I **wish** something **had happened** = I am sorry that it didn't happen:

- ☐ I **wish** I'd **known** that Gary was ill. I would have gone to see him. (but I didn't know)
- ☐ I feel sick. I **wish** I **hadn't eaten** so much cake. (I ate too much cake)
- ☐ Do you **wish** you **had studied** science instead of languages? (you didn't study science)

Do not use **would have ...** after **wish**:

- ☐ The weather was cold while we were away. I **wish** it **had been** warmer. (*not* I wish it would have been)

**D** Compare **would (do)** and **would have (done)**:

- ☐ If I **had gone** to the party last night, I **would be** tired now. (I am not tired now – *present*)
- ☐ If I **had gone** to the party last night, I **would have met** lots of people. (I didn't meet lots of people – *past*)

Compare **would have**, **could have** and **might have**:

- ☐ If the weather **hadn't been** so bad, {
  - we **would have gone** out.
  - we **could have gone** out.
  - (= we would have been able to go out)
  - we **might have gone** out.
  - (= perhaps we would have gone out)

# Exercises

## Unit 40

### 40.1 Put the verb into the correct form.

- 1 I didn't know you were in hospital. If I'd known (I / know), I would have gone (I / go) to see you.
- 2 Sam got to the station just in time to catch the train to the airport. If ..... (he / miss) the train, ..... (he / miss) his flight.
- 3 I'm glad that you reminded me about Amanda's birthday. .... (I / forget) if ..... (you / not / remind) me.
- 4 Unfortunately I forgot my address book when I went on holiday. If ..... (I / have) your address, ..... (I / send) you a postcard.
- 5 A: How was your holiday? Did you have a nice time?  
B: It was OK, but ..... (we / enjoy) it more if ..... (the weather / be) nicer.
- 6 I took a taxi to the hotel, but the traffic was bad. .... (it / be) quicker if ..... (I / walk).
- 7 I'm not tired. If ..... (I / be) tired, I'd go home now.
- 8 I wasn't tired last night. If ..... (I / be) tired, I would have gone home earlier.

### 40.2 For each situation, write a sentence beginning with If.

- 1 I wasn't hungry, so I didn't eat anything.  
If I'd been hungry, I would have eaten something.
- 2 The accident happened because the road was icy.  
If the road .....
- 3 I didn't know that Joe had to get up early, so I didn't wake him up.  
If I .....
- 4 I was able to buy the car only because Jane lent me the money.  
.....
- 5 Karen wasn't injured in the crash because she was wearing a seat belt.  
.....
- 6 You didn't have any breakfast – that's why you're hungry now.  
.....
- 7 I didn't get a taxi because I didn't have any money.  
.....

### 40.3 Imagine that you are in these situations. For each situation, write a sentence with I wish.

- 1 You've eaten too much and now you feel sick.  
You say: I wish I hadn't eaten so much.
- 2 There was a job advertised in the newspaper. You decided not to apply for it. Now you think that your decision was wrong.  
You say: I wish I .....
- 3 When you were younger, you never learned to play a musical instrument. Now you regret this.  
You say: .....
- 4 You've painted the gate red. Now you think that red was the wrong colour.  
You say: .....
- 5 You are walking in the country. You'd like to take some photographs, but you didn't bring your camera.  
You say: .....
- 6 You have some unexpected guests. They didn't phone first to say they were coming. You are very busy and you are not prepared for them.  
You say (to yourself): .....