

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

A

Compare these examples:

- (1) LISA: Shall we go by bus or by train?
JESS: **If we go** by bus, it **will** be cheaper.

For Jess, it is possible that they will go by bus, so she says:

If we go by bus, it **will** be ... faster

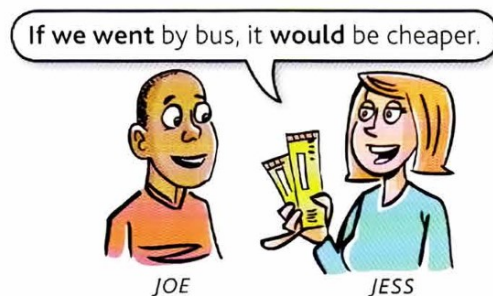


- (2) Lisa and Jess decide to go by train.
Later, Jess talks to Joe.

JOE: How are you going to travel?
JESS: We're going by train. **If we went** by bus, it **would** be cheaper, but the train is quicker.

Now Jess knows they are not going to travel by bus, so she says:

If we went by bus, it **would** be ... (not If we go ...) slower



When we imagine something that will not happen, or we don't expect that it will happen, we use **if + past** (**if we went / if there was / if you found** etc.).

But the meaning is *not* past:

- What would you do **if you won** a lot of money? (we don't really expect this to happen)
- If there was** (or **were**) an election tomorrow, who would you vote for?

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

Compare **if I find** and **if I found**:

- I think I left my watch at your house. **If you find** it, can you call me?

but **If you found** a wallet in the street, what would you do with it?



B

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

- I'd be very scared **if somebody pointed** a gun at me. (*not* if somebody would point)
- If we went** by bus, it would be cheaper. (*not* If we would 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**:

- What **would** you **do** if you were bitten by a snake?
- I'm not going to bed yet. 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 I won a lot of money, I **might buy** a house. (= it is possible that I would buy a house)
- If it stopped raining, we **could go** out. (= we would be able to go out)

Exercises

38.1 What do you say in these situations?

- Of course you don't expect to win the lottery. Which do you say?
 - If I win the lottery, I'll buy a big house.
 - If I won the lottery, I'd buy a big house. (b is correct)
- You're not going to sell your car because it's old and not worth much. Which do you say?
 - If I sell my car, I won't get much money for it.
 - If I sold my car, I wouldn't get much money for it.
- You often see Sarah. A friend of yours wants to contact her. Which do you say?
 - If I see Sarah, I'll tell her to call you.
 - If I saw Sarah, I'd tell her to call you.
- You don't expect that there will be a fire in the building. Which do you say?
 - What will you do if there is a fire in the building?
 - What would you do if there was a fire in the building?
- You've never lost your passport. You can only imagine it.
 - I don't know what I'll do if I lose my passport.
 - I don't know what I'd do if I lost my passport.
- Somebody stops you and asks the way to a bank. Which do you say?
 - If you go right at the end of this street, you'll see a bank on your left.
 - If you went right at the end of this street, you'd see a bank on your left.
- You're in a lift. There is an emergency button. Nobody is going to press it. Which do you say?
 - What will happen if somebody presses that button?
 - What would happen if somebody pressed that button?

38.2 Put the verb into correct form.

- I'd be very scared if somebody pointed (point) a gun at me.
- I can't afford to buy a car. If I bought (buy) a car, I'd have to borrow the money.
- Don't lend Amy your car. If she asked (ask) me, I wouldn't lend her mine.
- If the computer factory closed down, many people would lose (lose) their jobs.
- I don't think Gary and Emma will get married. I would be (be) amazed if they did.
- What would you do if you were (be) in a lift and it stopped (stop) between floors?
- If somebody gave (give) me £10,000, I would have (have) a very long holiday.

38.3 Write sentences beginning If ...

- We've decided not to catch the 10.30 train. (arrive too early)
If we caught the 10.30 train, we'd arrive too early.
- Kevin is not going to do his driving test now. (fail)
If he did the driving test now, he could fail.
- We've decided not to stay at a hotel. (cost too much)
If we decided to stay at a hotel, we would spend too much.
- Sally isn't going to leave her job. (not / get another one)
If Sally left her job, she wouldn't get another one.
- We've decided not to invite Ben to the party. (have to invite his friends too)
If Ben came to the party, we would have to invite his friends too.
- I'm not going to tell him what happened. (not / believe me) friends too
If I told him what happened, he wouldn't believe me.

38.4 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences.

- If I won a lot of money, I'd buy a house.
- I'd be very angry if I had done a error.
- If you bought a car, you would go to work faster.
- I'd be surprised if you came to my party.
- Would you mind if I used your pen?

If I knew ... I wish I knew ...

A

Study this example situation:

Sarah wants to phone Paul, but she can't do this because she doesn't know his number. She says:

If I knew his number, I **would phone** him.

Sarah says: **If I knew** his number ... This tells us that she *doesn't* know his number. She is imagining the situation. The *real* situation is that she doesn't know his number.



If I knew his number ...

When we imagine a situation like this, we use **if + past (if I knew / if you were / if we didn't etc.)**. But the meaning is present, *not* past:

- There are many things I'd like to do **if I had** more time. (but I don't have time)
- If I didn't** want to go to the party, I wouldn't go. (but I want to go)
- We wouldn't have any money **if we didn't** work. (but we work)
- If you were** in my position, what would you do?
- It's a pity he can't drive. It would be useful **if he could**.

B

We use the past in the same way after **wish (I wish I knew / I wish you were etc.)**. We use **wish** to say that we regret something, that something is not as we would like it to be:

- I **wish I knew** Paul's phone number. (= I don't know it and I regret this)
- Do you ever **wish** you **could** fly? (you can't fly)
- It rains a lot here. I **wish** it **didn't** rain so much.
- It's very crowded here. I **wish** there **weren't** so many people. (there are a lot of people)
- I **wish I didn't** have to work tomorrow, but unfortunately I do.



I wish I had an umbrella.

C

If I were / if I was

After **if** and **wish**, you can use **were** instead of **was** (**if I were / I wish it were** etc.).

If I was / I wish it was are also possible. So you can say:

- If I were** you, I wouldn't buy that coat. *or* **If I was** you, ...
- I'd go for a walk **if it weren't** so cold. *or* ... **if it wasn't** so cold.
- I **wish she were** here. *or* I **wish she was** here.

D

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

- If I were** rich, I **would** travel a lot. (*not* If I would be rich)
- Who **would** you ask **if you needed** help? (*not* if you would need)
- I **wish I had** something to read. (*not* I wish I would have)

Sometimes **wish ... would** is possible: **I wish you would listen**. See Unit 41.

E

Could sometimes means 'would be able to' and sometimes 'was/were able to':

- She **could** get a better job (she **could** get = she would be able to get)
if she **could** speak English. (if she **could** speak = if she was/were able to speak)
- I wish I **could** help you. (I wish I could = I wish I was able)

Exercises

39.1 Put the verb into the correct form.

- 1 If I knew (I / know) his number, I would phone him.
- 2 I wouldn't buy (I / not / buy) that coat if I were you.
- 3 I would help (I / help) you if I could, but I'm afraid I can't.
- 4 We don't need a car at present, but we would need a car if we lived (we / live) in the country.
- 5 If we had the choice, we would live (we / live) in the country.
- 6 This soup isn't very good. it would taste (it / taste) better if it wasn't so salty.
- 7 I wouldn't mind living in England if the weather was (be) better.
- 8 If I were you, I wouldn't wait (I / not / wait). I would go (I / go) now.
- 9 You're always tired. If you didn't go (you / not / go) to bed so late every night, you wouldn't be tired all the time.
- 10 I think there are too many cars. If there weren't (there / not / be) so many cars, there wouldn't be (there / not / be) so much pollution.

39.2 Write a sentence with **if ...** for each situation.

- 1 We don't see you very often because you live so far away.
If you didn't live so far away, we'd see you more often.
- 2 It's a nice book but it's too expensive, so I'm not going to buy it.
I would buy it if it cost less/ it was cheaper.
- 3 We don't go out very often – we can't afford it.
We would go out more often if we afforded it / could afford it
- 4 I can't meet you tomorrow – I have to work late.
If
- 5 It would be nice to have lunch outside but it's raining, so we can't.
We
- 6 I don't want his advice, and that's why I'm not going to ask for it.
If

39.3 Write sentences beginning **I wish ...**

- 1 I don't know many people (and I'm lonely). I wish I knew more people.
- 2 I don't have a computer (and I need one). I wish
- 3 Helen isn't here (and I need to see her).
- 4 It's cold (and I hate cold weather).
- 5 I live in a big city (and I don't like it).
- 6 I can't go to the party (and I'd like to).
- 7 I have to get up early tomorrow (but I'd like to sleep late).
.....
- 8 I don't know anything about cars (and my car has just broken down).
.....
- 9 I'm not feeling well (and it's not nice).
.....

39.4 Write your own sentences beginning **I wish ...**

- 1 (somewhere you'd like to be now – on the beach, in New York, in bed etc.)
I wish I
- 2 (something you'd like to have – a motorbike, more friends, lots of money etc.)
.....
- 3 (something you'd like to be able to do – sing, travel more, cook etc.)
.....
- 4 (something you'd like to be – beautiful, strong, younger etc.)
.....

33.4

- 3 We should have reserved a table.
- 4 The shop should be open (now). /
The shop should have
opened by now. *or*
It should ...
- 5 She shouldn't be doing 50. /
She shouldn't be driving so fast. /
She should be driving more slowly.
- 6 I should have written down her
address. / I should have written her
address down. *or*
I should have written it down.
- 7 The driver in front shouldn't have
stopped without warning. / ...
shouldn't have stopped so suddenly.
- 8 I should have been looking where I
was going. / I shouldn't have been
looking behind me.

UNIT 34

34.1

- 2 I should stay / I stay / I stayed
a little longer
- 3 they should visit / they visit / they
visited the museum after lunch
- 4 we should pay / we pay / we paid
the rent by Friday
- 5 I should go / I go / I went away for
a few days

34.2

- 1 b *OK*
c *OK*
d *wrong*
- 2 a *OK*
b *wrong*
c *OK*

34.3

- 2 should say
- 3 should worry
- 4 should leave
- 5 should ask
- 6 should listen

34.4

- 2 If it should rain
- 3 If there should be any problems
- 4 If anyone should ask
- 5 Should there be any problems
- 6 Should anyone ask (where I'm going)

34.5

- 2 I should keep
- 3 I should phone
- 4 I should get

UNIT 35

35.1

- 2 You'd better put a plaster on it.
- 3 We'd better reserve a table.
- 4 You'd better not go to work (this
morning).
- 5 I'd better pay my phone bill (soon). /
I'd better pay it (soon).
- 6 I'd better not disturb him.

35.2

- 3 'd better
- 4 should
- 5 should
- 6 'd better
- 7 should
- 8 should

35.3

- 1 b 'd/had
c close/shut
d hadn't
- 2 a did
b was done
c thought

35.4

- 2 It's time I had a holiday.
- 3 It's time the train left.
- 4 It's time I/we had a party.
- 5 It's time some changes were made. /
It's time the company made some
changes.
- 6 It's time he tried something else.

UNIT 36

36.1

Example answers:

- 2 I wouldn't like to be a teacher.
- 3 I'd love to learn to fly a plane.
- 4 It would be nice to have a big garden.
- 5 I'd like to go to Mexico.

36.2

- 2 'd enjoy / would enjoy
- 3 'd have enjoyed / would have
enjoyed
- 4 would you do
- 5 'd have stopped / would have
stopped
- 6 would have been
- 7 'd be / would be
- 8 'd have passed / would have passed
- 9 would have

36.3

- 2 e
- 3 b
- 4 f
- 5 a
- 6 d

36.4

- 2 He promised he'd call. /
... he would call.
- 3 You promised you wouldn't tell her.
- 4 They promised they'd wait (for us). /
... they would wait.

36.5

- 2 wouldn't tell
- 3 wouldn't speak
- 4 wouldn't let

36.6

- 2 would shake
- 3 would always help
- 4 would share
- 5 would always forget

UNIT 37

37.1

- 2 Can/Could I leave a message (for
her)? *or*
Can/Could you give her a message?
- 3 Can/Could you tell me how to get to
the station? *or*
... the way to the station? *or*
... where the station is?
- 4 Can/Could I try on these trousers?
or
Can/Could I try these (trousers) on?
- 5 Can I give/offer you a lift?

37.2

- 3 Do you think you could check these
forms (for me)? / ... check them
(for me)?
- 4 Do you mind if I leave work early?
- 5 Do you think you could turn the
music down? / ... turn it down?
- 6 Is it OK if I close the window?
- 7 Do you think I could have a look at
your paper? / ... at your newspaper?

37.3

- 2 Can/Could/Would you show me?
or Do you think you could show
me? *or* ... do it for me?
- 3 Would you like to sit down?
or Would you like a seat?
or Can I offer you a seat?
- 4 Can/Could/Would you slow down?
or Do you think you could ... ?
- 5 Can/Could/May I/we have the
bill, please? *or* Do you think I/we
could have ... ?
- 6 Would you like to borrow it?

UNIT 38

38.1

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 2 b | 5 b |
| 3 a | 6 a |
| 4 b | 7 b |

Key to Exercises

38.2

- 2 bought
- 3 asked
- 4 would lose
- 5 'd be / would be
- 6 were ... stopped
- 7 gave ... 'd have / would have

38.3

- 2 If he did his driving test now, he'd fail (it) / ... he would fail (it).
- 3 If we stayed at a hotel, it would cost too much.
- 4 If she left her job, she wouldn't get another one.
- 5 If we invited Ben (to the party), we'd have to invite his friends too. / ... we would have to ...
- 6 If I told him what happened, he wouldn't believe me.

38.4

Example answers:

- 2 I'd be very angry if somebody broke into my house.
- 3 If you bought a car, it would cost you a lot to maintain it.
- 4 I'd be surprised if the economic situation improved.
- 5 Would you mind if I didn't go out with you tonight?

UNIT 39

39.1

- 3 I'd help / I would help
- 4 we lived
- 5 we'd live / we would live
- 6 It would taste
- 7 were/was
- 8 I wouldn't wait ... I'd go / I would go
- 9 you didn't go
- 10 there weren't ... there wouldn't be

39.2

- 2 I'd buy it / I would buy it if it weren't/wasn't so expensive.
- 3 We'd go out / We would go out more often if we could afford it.
- 4 If I didn't have to work late, I could meet you tomorrow. *or* ... I'd meet / I would meet ... *or* ... I'd be able to meet ...
- 5 We could have lunch outside if it weren't raining / wasn't raining.
- 6 If I wanted his advice, I'd ask for it / I would ask for it.

39.3

- 2 I wish I had a computer.
- 3 I wish Helen were/was here.
- 4 I wish it weren't/wasn't (so) cold.
- 5 I wish I didn't live in a big city.
- 6 I wish I could go to the party.
- 7 I wish I didn't have to get up early tomorrow.
- 8 I wish I knew something about cars.
- 9 I wish I were feeling / was feeling better.

39.4

Example answers:

- 1 I wish I was at home.
- 2 I wish I had a big garden.
- 3 I wish I could tell jokes.
- 4 I wish I was taller.

UNIT 40

40.1

- 2 If he'd missed / he had missed (the train), he'd have missed / he would have missed (his flight too).
- 3 I'd have forgotten / I would have forgotten (if) you hadn't reminded
- 4 I'd had / I had had (your address), I'd have sent / I would have sent (you an email)
- 5 we'd have enjoyed / we would have enjoyed (it more if the weather) had been (better)
- 6 It would have been (quicker if) I'd walked / I had walked
- 7 I were / I was
- 8 I'd been / I had been

40.2

- 2 If the road hadn't been icy, the accident wouldn't have happened.
- 3 If I'd known / If I had known that Joe had to get up early, I'd have woken / I would have woken him up.
- 4 If I hadn't lost my phone (or if I'd had my phone), I'd have called you / I would have called you / I would have been able to call you / I could have called you
- 5 If Karen hadn't been wearing a seat belt, she'd have been injured / she would have been injured (in the crash). *or* ... she might/could have been injured
- 6 If you'd had / If you had had breakfast, you wouldn't be hungry now.
- 7 If I'd had / If I had had enough money, I'd have got / I would have got a taxi.

40.3

- 2 I wish I'd applied / I wish I had applied for it. *or* ... for the job.
- 3 I wish I'd learned / I wish I had learned to play a musical instrument (when I was younger). *or* I wish I could play ... / I wish I was able to play
- 4 I wish I hadn't painted it red. *or* ... the gate red.
- 5 I wish I'd brought / I wish I had brought my camera. *or* I wish I had my camera (with me)
- 6 I wish they'd phoned / I wish they had phoned me first (to say they were coming). *or* I wish I'd known / I wish I had known they were coming.

UNIT 41

41.1

- 2 hope 5 hope
- 3 wish 6 wish ... hope
- 4 wished

41.2

- 2 I wish Jane/she would come. *or* ... would hurry up.
- 3 I wish somebody would give me a job.
- 4 I wish the/tha baby would stop crying.
- 5 I wish you would buy some new clothes. *or* I wish you would get some new clothes.
- 6 I wish you wouldn't drive so fast.
- 7 I wish you wouldn't leave the door open (all the time).
- 8 I wish people wouldn't drop litter in the street.

41.3

- 2 OK
- 3 I wish I had more free time.
- 4 I wish our flat was/were a bit bigger.
- 5 OK
- 6 OK
- 7 I wish everything wasn't/weren't so expensive.

41.4

- 3 I knew
- 4 I'd taken / I had taken
- 5 I could come
- 6 I wasn't / I weren't
- 7 they'd hurry up / they would hurry up
- 8 we didn't have
- 9 we could have stayed
- 10 it wasn't / it weren't
- 11 he'd decide / he would decide
- 12 we hadn't gone