

Presentation

You use *if* with the past simple to talk about situations that are ...

- possible but unlikely:
If I won the lottery, ... (I don't think it's very likely that I'll win the lottery.)
- impossible:
If I were you, ... (but I'm not you and I never will be.)

You use the *if*-clause to describe the situation. You use *would/wouldn't* + infinitive in the main clause to talk about the imagined reaction to, or result of, the situation:

If I won the lottery, I'd buy a luxury yacht.

If I were you, I'd concentrate on my work.

You can also use *if* with the past simple to talk about ...

- imagined present situations:
If I had a lot of money, ... (the real situation is that I don't have a lot of money.)
- imagined future situations:
If I got a new job next week, ... (I don't think I will get a new job.)

This is often called the second conditional.

If clause: *if* + past simple

If I had a lot of money,
If he didn't have to work,

If you won the lottery,

Main clause: *would* + infinitive

I'd (would) buy a yacht.
he wouldn't (would not) get up so early.
would you spend all the money?
Yes, I would. / No, I wouldn't.

TIP The contracted form of *would* is *'d*. Do not confuse it with the contracted form of *had* in the past perfect. *Would* is followed by the infinitive. *Had* is followed by the past participle.

I'd go = *I would go*

I'd gone = *I had gone* (not ~~*I would gone*~~)

If I was or If I were?

When you use the verb *be* with *if* in the simple past, you can use *was* or *were* for *I*, *he*, *she* and *it*.

If I were rich ... / If I was rich ...

If he were my husband ... / If he was my husband ...

Were is more formal.

You often use *If I were you* to give advice. *If I were you* = *If I was / were in your position*. You use *would* / *wouldn't* for the advice.

If I were you, I'd get on with my work!

Exercises

1 Put the words in order.

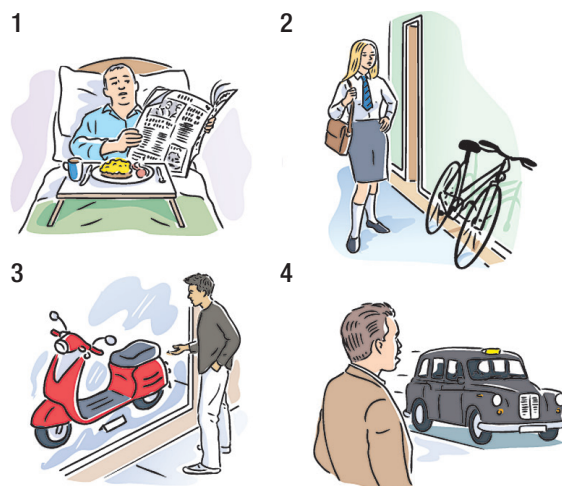
- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 the lottery give I to charity won I'd the money if | 4 asked for mind if wouldn't he you some help |
| 2 taller he'd were he be a great if basketball player | 5 if by bus I have go to work I'd didn't a car |
| 3 if I more energy did I'd some exercise have | 6 worrying it stop if I about were I'd you |

2 Choose the correct options. Then listen and check.

- A: So, if you ¹won / would win a million pounds on the lottery, what ²did / would you do with it?
- B: I don't know. I think ³I bought / I'd buy a house, and if my family ⁴needed / would need some money, ⁵I gave / I'd give them some, of course.
- A: ⁶Did / Would you give any money to charity?
- B: If ⁷I knew / I'd know the money was going to help someone have a better life, well, yes, I ⁸did / would. What about you?
- A: If ⁹I had / I'd have a million pounds, ¹⁰I started / I'd start my own business. ¹¹I opened / I'd open an art gallery or something like that ...
- B: Nice idea. If ¹²I started / I'd start a new business, I think ¹³I wanted / I'd want to run a restaurant or a bar.

3 Complete the people's thoughts.

- 1 I have to work this morning. If I didn't have to work this morning, I'd have breakfast in bed.
- 2 I haven't got enough time. If I
to school on my bike.
- 3 I haven't got enough money. If I
that scooter.
- 4 I don't know how to drive. If I
a taxi driver.



4 Complete the sentences so that they are true for you.

- 1 If I had, I
- 2 If I could, I
- 3 If I didn't have to, I