

Grammar in context

Second conditional

1a Look at these sentences. Then choose the correct alternative in sentences a–c.

- 1 If I **went**, I'd meet some famous actors.
- 2 If I **were** you, I'd do it.
- 3 I **would earn** a hundred pounds if I **worked** all weekend.

a We use the second conditional for possible and probable/improbable and imaginary situations and their consequences.

b We use the second conditional to talk about the past/the present or future.

c We can use the expression **If I were/was you, I'd ...** to give advice/express obligation.

1b Choose the correct alternative.

- 1 In the part of the sentence with **if** we use the past simple/would(n't) + infinitive.
- 2 In the other part of the sentence we use the past simple/would(n't) + infinitive.
- 3 We can/can't use **was** or **were** with **if I/he/she ...**

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2 Look at the situations and write sentences using the second conditional.

- 1 I don't work because I'm still at school.
If I wasn't still at school, I'd work.
- 2 He isn't a pilot because he can't see very well.
- 3 She doesn't repair computers because she doesn't know how to.
- 4 I'm not a professional athlete because I'm not fast enough.
- 5 I don't work as an interpreter because I only speak two languages.
- 6 We want to leave this company because we aren't happy here.
- 7 She can't take part in the concert because she doesn't sing very well.

3 Complete the text with the correct form of the verbs in the box.

be • do • eat • look • play • put

There are some very unusual jobs!

If people (a) golf better, this first job wouldn't exist. Some golf clubs pay professional divers to go into lakes and collect all the golf balls that go into the water.

If you (b) like a famous person, you would be able to make money. You could pretend to be the famous person and appear at parties or in adverts or TV shows.

Believe it or not, some people taste dog food professionally to check that it tastes good. If I (c) dog food, I'd be ill!

One hotel in London had a professional bed warmer. They paid somebody to get into the bed for five minutes and make it warm. If I (d) that job, I'd fall asleep all the time!

Would you buy an orange if it (e) green or yellow? Most people wouldn't. But in some warm places the natural colour of oranges isn't actually orange. That's why some people's job is to make oranges orange – by suddenly making them cold or by exposing them to ethylene gas.

If people (f) their chewing gum in the bin, we wouldn't need 'Gum Busters'. These are people who use water at high pressure to take away chewing gum from any type of surface.



