

## Contrary-to-fact Sentences Conditionals

A conditional is a statement that has two clauses (two parts). The first states what one would do, the second states the required conditional that would make the first part true.

The formula would be:

A wants b but cannot have b because A does not have c.

In sentence form it would look like this:

Jim wants a new car but cannot have a new car because he does not have the money to buy a new car.

So, A = Jim, b = a new car, c = money.

In a conditional, the sentence would be:

Jim would buy a new car if he had the money.

The first part of the sentence tells us what Jim wants. (a new car)

The second part of the sentence tells us what he needs in order to get the new car. (money)

The sentence could also be stated:

If Jim had the money, he would buy a new car.

The word **if** functions as a conditional and is often used to talk about situations that are contrary to the fact:

( situations that are opposite of the true situation ).

Contrary-to-fact sentences with an if-clause and a result-clause are called conditional sentences.

Special verb forms are used with conditional sentences.

The simple past tense is used to discuss a present or future situation in the if-clause; would or could plus the simple form of the verb is used in the result-clause.

True situation:

(a) I **don't** have any money.

Making a wish:

(b) I **wish I had** some money.

Using IF:

(c) If I **had** enough money, I **would buy** a car.

(d) If I **had** enough money, I **could buy** a car.

## Contrary-to-fact Sentences Conditionals

| True Situation   |               |
|--|---------------|
| (a) The weather <b>isn't</b> nice today.                                   |               |
| Making a Wish  |               |
| (b) I wish the weather <b>were</b> nice today.                             |               |
| Using If   |               |
| (c) If the weather <b>were</b> nice today, I <b>would go to the park</b> . |               |
| (d) If the weather <b>were</b> nice today, I <b>could go to the park</b> . |               |
| if-clause  | result-clause |
| (i) If I had enough money  |               |
| I <b>would</b> buy a car.  |               |
| result-clause  | if-clause     |
| (j) I <b>would go</b> to the park  |               |
| if the weather <b>were</b> nice.   |               |

In (i) and (j), the speakers are talking about a present situation (not having money) and the weather not being nice) and a future situation that is contrary to the fact. In both the simple past is used in the **conditional-clause**, (**if-clause**)

(k) If I had enough money, I **would** buy a car.  
(the speaker wants to buy a car.)

(l) If I had enough money, I **could** buy a car.  
(The speaker is expressing a possibility.)

**Would** is used to express a desired result. (What the speaker wants.)

**Could** is used to express possible options. (Could = would be able to.)

(m) If the **weather were** nice, I'd go to the park.

(n) If I **were** you, I wouldn't do that.

In (m) and (n), **were** (not **was**) is used for singular subjects in the if-clause.

## Contrary-to-fact Sentences Conditionals

### True vs. Contrary-to-Fact

| True Situation:(simple present)                                     |
|---|
| (a1) If you <b>need</b> some money, I <b>will</b> lend you some.    |
| (a2) If you <b>need</b> some money, I <b>can</b> lend you some.     |
| Contrary-to-Fact Situation:(simple past)                            |
| (b1) If you <b>needed</b> some money, I <b>would lend</b> you some. |
| (b2) If you <b>needed</b> some money, I <b>could lend</b> you some. |

In (a): If it is true that you need some money, I will ( or can) lend you some.

In (b): In truth, you really don't need any money. But if the opposite were true, I would (or could) lend you some.