

All about the Third Conditional

Talk about things in the past that didn't happen and hypothetical results.

1. Discuss

Discuss the following with a partner.

1. How would you describe your personality?
2. Do you usually get on with people who are similar or different to you?
3. When was the last time you had a disagreement with someone? How did you solve it?
4. Have you ever fallen out with someone?



Photo by Budgeron Bach

2. Reading

A. Read the dialogue. Change roles and practice again.

Alan I can't believe you forgot to pack the passports!

Susan I would have remembered to pack them if I hadn't been so distracted packing your suitcase!

Alan Well, I had to load the dishwasher. If the kids had done it like they were told, I would have packed my own suitcase.

Susan They would have loaded the dishwasher yesterday if you hadn't been playing video games with them all day!

Alan Yes well, I promised them I would so...

Susan Never mind. Let's just go home, get the passports, and catch a later flight. We can go for breakfast on the way back home. I didn't eat anything this morning.

Alan Well... If we had left earlier, we could have gotten breakfast on the way, but someone had to spend two hours cleaning the kitchen.

Susan I wouldn't have had to clean if you and the kids... Oh, never mind. Let's just go. I'm in the mood for waffles.

B. Discuss the questions about the dialogue.

1. What type of relationship do Alan and Susan have?
2. Where are Alan and Susan?
3. In your own words, what happened to Alan and Susan? Why?
4. What did Alan and Susan decide to do in the end?
5. What does Susan mean when she says she is "in the mood" for waffles?

3. The Third Conditional

A. Scan the dialogue and decide whether these things happened or didn't happen.

- | | | | |
|---|----------|-------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Alan and Susan forgot their passports. | yes / no | 4. Susan had breakfast. | yes / no |
| 2. Alan packed his own suitcase. | yes / no | 5. Susan cleaned the kitchen. | yes / no |
| 3. The kids loaded the dishwasher. | yes / no | | |

B. Answer the questions about the sentence in italics.

If we had left earlier, we could have gotten breakfast on the way, but someone had to spend two hours cleaning the kitchen.

- 1. When was the kitchen cleaned? **the past / the present / the future**
- 2. Did Alan and Susan leave early? **yes / no**
- 3. Did Alan and Susan get breakfast on the way? **yes / no**

C. Review the third conditional sentence pattern.

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| | Past perfect | | Would have | Past participle |
| 1. | If I had studied harder, | I | would have | passed the test. |
| | Would have | Past participle | Past perfect | |
| 2. | I would have | passed the test | if I had studied harder. | |

D. Complete the following.

- 1. Use the third conditional to talk about something in the **past / present** that **did / did not** happen.
- 2. Complete the conditional sentence with words a-c.
 - a. arrived
 - b. had
 - c. would

If we left earlier, we have on time.

- 3. Complete Susan's final sentence.

I wouldn't have had to clean if you and the kids...

.....

4. Practice

A. Match the two parts of the conditional sentences.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. ____ I would have gone to University in London | a. if he had known you were here. |
| 2. ____ They wouldn't have told her | b. she would have stopped to say hello. |
| 3. ____ He could have met you for lunch | c. if they had known it was a secret. |
| 4. ____ We might have gone | d. if I had passed the entry exam. |
| 5. ____ If she had seen you, | e. if we had had the time. |

B. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the word in brackets.

1. If Jamie and Paul (know) it was Kelly's birthday, they would (send) a card.
2. We could (go) out if we (find) a sitter.
3. If I (not lose) my plane ticket, I would never (meet) my girlfriend.
4. Olivia would (pass) her exam if she (study) more.
5. Alex wouldn't (get) fired if he (not be) stealing from the company.

C. Review the sentences in Part 4B and complete the following with did or didn't.

1. Jamie and Paul know it was Kelly's birthday.
2. Jamie and Paul send a card.
3. Olivia pass her exam.
4. Olivia study hard.
5. Alex get fired.
6. Alex steal money from the company.

D. Complete the sentences with information about yourself.

1. If I hadn't come to class today, I...
.....
2. If I hadn't eaten breakfast this morning, I...
.....
3. If I had studied English more when I was younger, I...
.....
4. If I had arrived at the airport without my passport, I...
.....
5. If I had..., I...
.....
6. If I hadn't..., I...
.....

All about the Third Conditional



Level:	Intermediate: B1 Upper-Intermediate: B2
Updated:	Nov 23, 2022
Language:	Function: Asking and answering questions. Expressing or supporting opinions. Talking about the past. Forms: Conditional forms. Past forms. Perfect forms. Modal and auxiliary verbs.
Teaching time:	90 minutes.
Overview:	Students understand the third conditional and use it to make statements about actions in the past that did and didn't happen and the hypothetical result of those actions. Students discuss the topic of disagreements with focus on a conversation between two people.

1. DISCUSS

A warm up activity helps set the mood for the topic/lesson and is a good opportunity to assess students' ability to generate language as well as elicit target vocabulary used in the lesson. If students struggle to engage with their partners, ask questions to encourage participation. Allow a few minutes for students to complete the activity and continue the conversation if interesting.

Elicit answers from students in open class

2. VOCABULARY

A. In pairs, students read the dialogue, change roles and practice again. Answer any questions that arise about vocabulary.

B. In pairs, students discuss the questions. Answers may vary.

1. They are a couple with children.
2. They are at an airport.
3. Students' own answers. Variations of:
Alan and Susan are at the airport when they realize they do not have their passports.

Susan forgot to pack the passports because she had to pack Alan's suitcase.

Alan did not pack his suitcase because he was loading the dishwasher.

The kids were supposed to load the dishwasher but didn't because they were playing video games with their dad (Alan).

Susan is hungry because she did not eat breakfast. She did not eat breakfast because she was cleaning the kitchen.

Alan and Susan did not get breakfast on the way because they did not have enough time.

4. Alan and Susan decided to go back home to get their passports and catch a later flight. They will get breakfast on the way home.
5. It means she would really like to have waffles for breakfast.

3. THE THIRD CONDITIONAL

A. Individually, students scan the dialogue and decide whether the sentences happened or didn't happen. Students can circle the alternatives. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers as a class.

1. yes

2. no
3. no
4. no
5. yes

B. Individually, students answer the questions about the sentence in italics. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers as a class.

1. the past
2. no
3. no

C. Discuss the third conditional sentence structure with students. Remind students that the order of clauses in conditional statements can be reversed and that for the third conditional we can use the modal verbs would, could, and might. Notice the position of the comma when reversing the condition and result clauses.

D. Individually, students complete 1-3. Assist students if necessary. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers as a class.

1. Use the third conditional to talk about something in the **past** that **did not** happen.
2. If we **had** left earlier, we **would** have **arrived** on time.
3. Students complete Susan's final sentence. Elicit answers in open class.

4. PRACTICE

A. Individually, students match the two parts of the sentences. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers as a class.

1. I would have gone to University in London **(d)** if I had passed the entry exam.
2. They wouldn't have told her **(c)** if they had known it was a secret.
3. He could have met you for lunch **(a)** if he had known you were here.
4. We might have gone **(e)** if we had had the time.
5. If she had seen you, **(b)** she would have stopped to say hello.

B. Individually, students complete the sentences with the correct form of the word in brackets. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers as a class.

1. If Jamie and Paul **had known** it was Kelly's birthday, they

- would **have sent** a card.
2. We could **have gone** out if we **had found** a sitter.
 3. If I **hadn't lost** my plane ticket, I would never **have met** my girlfriend.
 4. Olivia **would have** passed her exam if she **had studied** more.
 5. Alex wouldn't **have gotten fired** if he **hadn't been** stealing from the company.
- C. Individually, students review the sentences in Part 4B and complete the sentences with did or didn't. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers as a class.
1. Jamie and Paul **didn't** know it was Kelly's birthday.
 2. Jamie and Paul **didn't** send a card.
 3. Olivia **didn't** pass her exam.
 4. Olivia **didn't** study hard.
 5. Alex **did** get fired.
 6. Alex **did** steal money from the company.
- D. Individually, students complete the sentences with information about themselves. Students can discuss their sentences in pairs or present them to the class. Encourage students to ask follow up questions.