

Conditional 2 or Conditional 3?

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- Conditional 2: **unlikely future** situations or **unreal present** situations
- Conditional 3: **unreal** situations in the **past**

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➤ Conditional 2: **unlikely future** situations or **unreal present** situations

➤ *If I worked very hard, I would pass the exam.*

worked = not past tense

I am not working hard **now (unreal present)**

I am **unlikely** to work hard

I will take the exam in the **future**

➤ Conditional 3: **unreal** situations in the **past**

➤ *If I had worked very hard, I would have passed the exam.*

I did not work hard in the **past**

I did not pass the exam (**unreal past**)

Conditional 2 or Conditional 3?

Sometimes both are acceptable, and have a similar meaning. There is a slightly different emphasis: Conditional 2 (present), Conditional 3 (past).

⇒ *If the government cared more about our safety, they would improve the roads.*

Emphasis on decisions and actions in the **present**:
the government are still able to improve the roads
(but unlikely)

⇒ *If the government had cared more about our safety, they would have improved the roads.*

Emphasis on decisions and actions in the **past**: the
government can no longer improve the roads

Conditional 2 or Conditional 3?

Sometimes both are acceptable, and have a similar meaning. There is a slightly different emphasis: Conditional 2 (present), Conditional 3 (past).

➤ *If the roads were better designed, there wouldn't be so many accidents.*

Emphasis on decisions and actions in the **present**:
the roads could still be changed (but unlikely);
accidents are in the present

➤ *If the roads had been better designed, there wouldn't have been so many accidents.*

Emphasis on decisions and actions in the **past**: the
roads can't be changed; accidents are in the past

Common Errors

1. Conditional 3: present perfect instead of past perfect

- *If I have not walked to school, I would not have got wet.*
- *If I had not walked to school, I would not have got wet.*

2. Conditional 3: 'would had' instead of 'would have'

- *If I had not walked to school, I would not had got wet.*
- *If I had not walked to school, I would not have got wet.*

3. Confusing Conditional 2 and Conditional 3

- *If I had more money, I would have bought a new laptop.*
- *If I had had more money, I would have bought a new laptop.*