

But ...

We **used to** go there every year.

In a narrative expressing a series of past actions, it is common to begin with *used to*, then continue with *would*.

When I was a child, we **used to** go on holiday to the seaside. We'd **play** on the beach, then we'd **eat** at a small café at lunchtime.

be/get used to + noun + -ing form

- 1 This is totally different from *used to* + infinitive. It expresses an action that was difficult, strange, or unusual before, but is no longer so. Here, *used* is an adjective, and it means *familiar with*.

I found travelling around London by Tube weird at first, but I'm **used to it** now.

After six months, I'm **used to driving** on the left.

- 2 Notice the use of *get* to express the process of adapting.

I'm **getting used to** the climate.

Don't worry. You'll **get used to** eating with chopsticks.

Unit 10

➔ 10.1 Modal auxiliary verbs 2

Modal auxiliary verbs of probability in the past

- 1 All modal auxiliary verbs can be used with the perfect infinitive. They express varying degrees of certainty. *Will have done* is the most certain, and *might/may/could have done* is the least certain.

'I met a girl at your party. Tall. Attractive.' 'That'll **have been** Sonya.' It **must have been** a good party. Everyone stayed till dawn.

The music **can't have been** any good. Nobody danced.

Where's Pete? He **should have been** here ages ago!

He **may have got** lost.

He **might have decided** not to come.

He **could have had** an accident.

- 2 *Would have thought* is common to express an assumption or supposition.

I'd **have thought** they'd be here by now. Where are they?

You'd **have thought** she'd remember my birthday, wouldn't you?

Other uses of modal verbs in the past

should have done

- 1 *Should have done* can express advice or criticism about a past event. The sentence expresses what is contrary to the facts.

You **should have listened** to my advice. (You didn't listen.)

I **shouldn't have lied** to you. I'm sorry. (I did lie.)

- 2 *Should have done* can be used for comic effect. The suggestion is 'because it was so funny!'

You **should have been** here yesterday!

You **should have seen** his face!

could have done

- 1 *Could have done* is used to express an unrealized past ability. Someone was able to do something in the past, but didn't do it.

I **could have gone** to university, but I didn't want to.

I **could have told** you that Chris wouldn't come. He hates parties.

- 2 It is also used to express a past possibility that didn't happen.

You fool! You **could have killed** yourself!

When I took the burnt meal out of the oven, I **could have cried**!

- 3 It is used to criticize people for not doing things.

You **could have told** me that Sue and Jim had split up! I've been cleaning the house for hours. You **could at least have done** your bedroom!

might have done

- 1 The above use of *could have done* can also be expressed with *might have done*.

You **might have helped** instead of just sitting on your backside!

- 2 *I might have known/guessed that ...* is used to introduce a typical (usually annoying) action of someone or something.

I **might have known** that Peter would be late. He's always late.

The car won't start. I **might have guessed** that would happen.

needn't have

Needn't have done expresses an action that was done, but wasn't necessary. It was a waste of time.

I **needn't have got up** so early. The train was delayed.

'You **needn't have bothered** to put sunscreen on. It's clouded over.'

Unit 11

➔ 11.1 First and second conditionals

- 1 First conditional sentences are based on fact in real time. They express a very possible condition and its result.

If you **pass** your exams, I'll **buy** you a car.

- 2 Second conditional sentences are not based on fact. They express a situation which is contrary to reality in the present and future. This unreality is shown by a tense shift from present to past. They express an unlikely or hypothetical condition and its result.

If I **were** taller, I'd **join** the police force.

What **would** you **do** if you **won** the lottery?

Notes

- The difference between first and second conditional sentences is not about time. Both can refer to the present and future. By using past tense forms in the second conditional, the speaker suggests the situation is less probable, impossible, or imaginary.

Compare the pairs of sentences.

If it **rains** later, we'll ... (said in England where it often rains)

If it **rained** in the Sahara, it **would** ... (this would be most unusual)

If you **come** to my country, you'll **have** a good time. (possible)

If you **came** from my country, you'd **understand** us better. (impossible)

If I **am elected** as a member of Parliament, I'll ... (real candidate)

If I **ruled** the world, I'd ... (imaginary)

- We can use *were* instead of *was*, especially in a formal style.

If the situation **were** the opposite, would you feel obliged to help?

➔ 11.2 Third conditional

- 1 Third conditional sentences are not based on fact. They express a situation which is contrary to reality in the past. This unreality is shown by a tense shift from Past Simple to Past Perfect.

If you'd **come** to the party, you'd **have had** a great time.

I **wouldn't have met** my wife if I **hadn't gone** to France.

- 2 Each of the clauses in a conditional sentence can have a different time reference. The result is a mixed conditional.

If we **had eaten** (we didn't), we **wouldn't be** hungry (we are).

I **wouldn't have married** her (I did) if I **didn't love** her (I do).