



## ***The Conditional in Italian***

The conditional is a verbal mode you need to use **to talk about what could happen or what could be true under certain circumstances**, to express conditions that have to do with uncertainty, to talk about actions and facts that are influenced by other actions and facts, to talk about what could happen, what might have happened, or what we wish would happen.

The conditional in Italian has a present and a past tense.



### **The Present Conditional in Italian**

The present conditional in Italian is used to talk about **things that might or might not happen in the present under certain circumstances**.

It is mainly used to express desires, to ask something politely, to express a personal opinion, to give advice. Here below is an example for each of these uses:

Desire:

*Vorrei tanto andare al mare domenica* (I'd really like to go to the beach on Sunday)

Polite request:

*Potrei avere un caffè, per cortesia?* (May I have a coffee, please?)

Personal opinion:

*Non dovresti smettere di studiare, è troppo importante!* (You shouldn't stop studying, it is too important)

Advice:

*Per dimagrire, dovresti cominciare a fare sport* (You should start doing sports if you want to lose weight)

It is also used in the *periodo ipotetico della realtà* (a hypothetical clause that describes situations that are unlikely or unreal in the present). Here are a couple of examples:

*Se avessi soldi, andrei in vacanza* (I'd go on holiday if I had the money)

*Se fossi ricco, smetterei subito di lavorare* (If I were rich, I'd immediately stop working)



## The Past Conditional in Italian

The past conditional in Italian is used to talk about things that might have happened in the past under certain circumstances, to talk about **something that might have happened in the past but didn't** and nothing can be done to change the situation.

You can use it to express desires in the past, to express personal opinions, or to give advice in the past. Here are some examples:

Desire:

*Avrei tanto voluto andare al mare domenica scorsa, ma pioveva* (I would have loved to go to the beach last Sunday but it was raining)

Personal opinion:

*Non avresti dovuto smettere di studiare, è troppo importante!* (You shouldn't have stopped studying, it's too important!)

Advice:

*Per dimagrire avresti dovuto fare sport* (You should have done sports if you wanted to lose weight)

It is also used in the *periodo ipotetico dell'irrealtà* (a hypothetical clause that describes situations in the past that are contrary to what happened). Here are some examples:

*Se avessi avuto dei soldi, sarei andato in vacanza* (If I had had some money, I would have gone on holiday)

*Se fossi stato ricco, avrei smesso di lavorare* (If I had been rich, I would have stopped working)



## The future in the past

In all these cases above, the use of the past conditional in Italian is quite similar to the one in English but there is a use of the past conditional in Italian which is quite different: while in English you use the present conditional **to express future in the past**, in Italian we use the past conditional.

The future in the past is used to **talk about an action or fact that comes after another action or fact in the past**. To do this we always use two clauses: the main one, whose verb is always in the

past tense, and the subordinate one, the one that expresses the action that comes after, which uses the past conditional.

Here are some examples of this use:

*Mi ha detto che avrebbe fatto tardi* (He told me he would be late)

*Sapevo che saresti ritornata a casa con quel cagnolino* (I knew you'd come home with that dog)

*Mi ha detto che sarebbe partita per le vacanze il giorno dopo* (She told me she would leave for the holidays the day after)

