

How to Use WOULD in English

Practice Worksheet: 10 Uses, Rules and Examples

Name: _____

Date: _____

Level: B1-B2 (+ challenge)

In this worksheet, you will practise **would** in polite language, preferences, conditionals, past habits and reported speech. Work through the exercises in order, then check your answers at the back.

Quick reference: the ten main uses

Use	Structure	Example
1. Polite request	Would you + base verb...?	Would you help me?
2. Offer / invitation	Would you like + noun / to-infinitive?	Would you like some tea?
3. Would like	would like + noun / to-infinitive	I'd like to book a table.
4. Tactful advice / opinion	I'd suggest / recommend / say...	I'd recommend revising first.
5. Would rather	would rather + base verb	I'd rather stay at home.
6. Would prefer	would prefer + noun / to-infinitive	I'd prefer to leave early.
7. Second conditional	If + past, would + base verb	If I had time, I would travel.
8. Third conditional	If + past perfect, would have + past participle	If I had known, I would have called.
9. Repeated past actions	past time + would + base verb	Every summer, we would swim in the river.
10. Reported speech	will -> would	She said she would call.

Remember: 'd can mean would or had. Use the words that follow to decide: I'd go = I would go; I'd finished = I had finished.

Exercise 1: Match each sentence to its use

Write the correct letter, A-J, beside each sentence. Use every letter once.

A. polite request	B. offer / invitation	C. would like	D. tactful advice	E. would rather
F. would prefer	G. second conditional	H. third conditional	I. repeated past action	J. reported speech

- Would you hold the door for me, please? _____
- I'd prefer to speak to the manager in person. _____
- She promised that she would send the document that afternoon. _____
- If I lived nearer the office, I would cycle to work. _____
- Would you like to join us for lunch? _____
- I'd recommend checking the figures once more. _____
- I'd rather wait until tomorrow than make a rushed decision. _____
- When we stayed with our grandparents, we would pick cherries in the garden. _____
- I'd like a return ticket to Cambridge, please. _____
- If we had left ten minutes earlier, we would have caught the train. _____

Exercise 2: Polite requests, offers and would like

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb or the most natural expression.

1. Would you _____ (send) me the updated timetable, please?
2. Would you like _____ (sit) by the window?
3. "Would you like some more cake?" "No, thank you. I _____ just a cup of coffee."
4. _____ you help me carry these boxes upstairs?
5. We _____ (like) to reserve a double room for two nights.
6. What _____ you like to drink?
7. Would your colleagues like _____ (attend) the online workshop?
8. "I am calling about the course." "Certainly. What _____ you like to know?"
9. Would you like tea _____ coffee?
10. _____ you please speak a little more slowly?

Exercise 3: Make the advice sound tactful

Rewrite each direct statement using the phrase in brackets. More than one answer may be possible.

1. Your introduction is too long. (I'd suggest...)

2. Do not worry about one small mistake. (I wouldn't...)

3. This is the best course for Marta. (I'd recommend...)

4. Talk to your manager before you decide. (I'd advise...)

5. The second option is more practical. (I'd say...)

6. Check the application form again. (I'd suggest...)

7. Do not book the cheapest hotel without reading the reviews. (I wouldn't...)

8. Take the earlier train because delays are common. (I'd recommend...)

Exercise 4: Would rather or would prefer?

Complete each sentence. Remember: would rather + base verb; would prefer + noun or to-infinitive.

1. I'd rather _____ (walk) than wait for another bus.
2. We'd prefer _____ (meet) on Thursday morning.
3. Would you rather _____ (work) alone or with a partner?
4. She'd prefer _____ quiet room away from the lift.
5. I'd rather not _____ (discuss) this in front of everyone.
6. They'd prefer _____ (receive) the invoice by email.
7. My brother would rather _____ (cook) than wash the dishes.
8. I think I'd prefer _____ tea, please.
9. Would you rather _____ (leave) now than risk missing the last train?
10. He'd prefer not _____ (make) a decision until he has all the facts.

Personal choice

Write four true sentences about yourself: two with would rather and two with would prefer.

Exercise 5: Second conditional: imaginary present or future

Put the verbs in brackets into the correct form.

1. If I _____ (have) more confidence, I _____ (speak) more in meetings.
2. What _____ you _____ (do) if you _____ (find) a wallet in the street?
3. If our office _____ (be) closer, we _____ (not need) a car.
4. She _____ (apply) for the job if she _____ (have) the right qualifications.
5. If you _____ (can) live anywhere for a year, where _____ you _____ (go)?
6. I _____ (not buy) that laptop if I _____ (be) you.
7. If the course _____ (cost) less, more students _____ (enrol).
8. We _____ (finish) sooner if everyone _____ (concentrate).

Exercise 6: Third conditional: imagining a different past

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs.

1. If I _____ (know) about the roadworks, I _____ (leave) earlier.
2. She _____ (not miss) the deadline if she _____ (check) her email.
3. If they _____ (book) in advance, they _____ (pay) less.
4. What _____ you _____ (say) if the interviewer _____ (ask) you that question?
5. We _____ (not get) lost if the map _____ (be) clearer.
6. If he _____ (take) the medicine, he _____ (feel) better sooner.
7. The team _____ (win) if they _____ (not make) so many mistakes.
8. If you _____ (tell) me, I _____ (help) you.

Exercise 7: Used to or would?

Write used to, would, or both. Write both only when both forms are grammatically possible in the sentence.

1. When I was six, I _____ believe that the moon followed our car.
2. Every Sunday, my grandfather _____ make pancakes for breakfast.
3. We _____ own a small cottage near the lake.
4. During the summer holidays, the children _____ swim until it grew dark.
5. My sister _____ dislike mushrooms, but she loves them now.
6. Whenever the bus was late, we _____ walk home from school.
7. There _____ be a small cinema at the end of this street.
8. After dinner, Dad _____ read the newspaper while Mum did the crossword.
9. I _____ have very long hair when I was at university.
10. In particularly cold winters, the river _____ freeze completely.

A memory paragraph

Write 70-90 words about a repeated routine from your childhood or early working life. Use used to at least once and would at least three times. Establish the past time clearly before using would.

Exercise 8: Reported speech: will becomes would

Rewrite the sentences in reported speech. Make any necessary changes to pronouns and time expressions.

1. Anna said, "I will call you tomorrow."

2. The manager said, "We will discuss the problem this afternoon."

3. Leo told me, "I will not be late again."

4. My parents said, "We will visit you next month."

5. The guide said, "The tour will begin at nine."

6. Sophie told Dan, "I will send you the photographs tonight."

7. The technician said, "I will check the system later."

8. They said, "We will make a final decision next week."

Exercise 9: What does 'd mean?

Write W if 'd means would and H if it means had.

1. I'd love to visit Scotland one day. _____
2. By the time we arrived, she'd already left. _____
3. They'd prefer a later appointment. _____
4. I'd never seen snow before that winter. _____
5. He said he'd help us with the move. _____
6. We'd finished dinner before the guests arrived. _____
7. She'd rather not answer that question. _____
8. I knew I'd forgotten something important. _____

Exercise 10: Correct the mistake

Each sentence contains one mistake connected with would. Rewrite it correctly.

1. I'd rather to stay at home this evening.

2. If I would have more time, I would learn another language.

3. She said that she will call me after the meeting.

4. When I was a child, I would be very shy.

5. Would you like come with us?

6. I'd prefer stay in a smaller hotel.

7. If I had known about the change, I would call you.

8. Would you to help me with this form?

9. He did not used to enjoy reading.

10. I'd suggest to revise the vocabulary before the test.

Exercise 11: Sentence transformations

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning. Use would in every answer.

1. I want to book a table for four.
I _____ a table for four.
2. Please pass me the salt.
_____ me the salt, please?
3. I prefer staying in tonight to going out.
I _____ in tonight than go out.
4. I do not have enough money, so I cannot buy the course.
If I had enough money, I _____ the course.
5. I did not know you were ill, so I did not visit you.
If I had known you were ill, I _____ you.

6. Every winter, our neighbour cleared the snow from everyone's path.
Every winter, our neighbour _____ the snow from everyone's path.
7. Maya said, "I will send the results on Friday."
Maya said that she _____ the results on Friday.
8. My advice is to practise little and often.
I _____ little and often.
9. Do you want another cup of tea?
_____ another cup of tea?
10. A quiet room is my preference.
I _____ a quiet room.

Exercise 12: Mixed-context dialogue

Complete the dialogue with the words from the box. Use each expression once.

would like	would rather	would you	would have
would be	would prefer	would call	would recommend

Hotel receptionist: Good afternoon. How can I help you?

Guest: I (1) _____ to book a room for Saturday night.

Receptionist: Certainly. (2) _____ like a single or a double room?

Guest: I (3) _____ a double room, but I (4) _____ stay at the back of the hotel than face the main road.

Receptionist: That (5) _____ quieter. I (6) _____ room 214 because it overlooks the garden.

Guest: Perfect. My friend said she (7) _____ the hotel this morning, but she forgot.

Receptionist: No problem. If she had called earlier, we (8) _____ reserved the same room. Luckily, it is still available.

Speaking practice

- What would you change about your daily routine if you had more free time?
- What would you rather do on a quiet Sunday: stay at home or go out?
- What would you recommend to someone preparing for an English exam?
- What activities would you do regularly when you were a child?
- What would you have done differently during your last holiday or busy week?
- Where would you like to travel, and why?

ANSWER KEY

Suggested answers are given for open-ended items. Other grammatically correct answers may also be possible.

Exercise 1

1. A
2. F
3. J
4. G
5. B
6. D
7. E
8. I
9. C
10. H

Exercise 2

1. send
2. to sit
3. would like
4. Would
5. would like
6. would
7. to attend
8. would
9. or
10. Would

Exercise 3

1. I'd suggest shortening your introduction.
2. I wouldn't worry about one small mistake.
3. I'd recommend this course for Marta.
4. I'd advise talking to your manager before you decide.
5. I'd say the second option is more practical.
6. I'd suggest checking the application form again.
7. I wouldn't book the cheapest hotel without reading the reviews.
8. I'd recommend taking the earlier train because delays are common.

Exercise 4

1. walk
2. to meet
3. work
4. a
5. discuss
6. to receive
7. cook
8. tea
9. leave
10. to make

Exercise 5

1. had; would speak
2. would; do; found
3. were; would not need
4. would apply; had
5. could; would; go
6. would not buy; were
7. cost; would enrol
8. would finish; concentrated

Exercise 6

1. had known; would have left
2. would not have missed; had checked
3. had booked; would have paid
4. would; have said; had asked
5. would not have got; had been
6. had taken; would have felt
7. would have won; had not made
8. had told; would have helped

Exercise 7

1. used to
2. both
3. used to

4. both
5. used to
6. both
7. used to
8. both
9. used to
10. both

Exercise 8

1. Anna said that she would call me the following day.
2. The manager said that they would discuss the problem that afternoon.
3. Leo told me that he would not be late again.
4. My parents said that they would visit me the following month.
5. The guide said that the tour would begin at nine.
6. Sophie told Dan that she would send him the photographs that night.
7. The technician said that he would check the system later.
8. They said that they would make a final decision the following week.

Exercise 9

1. W
2. H
3. W
4. H
5. W
6. H
7. W
8. H

Exercise 10

1. I'd rather stay at home this evening.
2. If I had more time, I would learn another language.
3. She said that she would call me after the meeting.
4. When I was a child, I used to be very shy.
5. Would you like to come with us?
6. I'd prefer to stay in a smaller hotel.
7. If I had known about the change, I would have called you.
8. Would you help me with this form?
9. He did not use to enjoy reading.
10. I'd suggest revising the vocabulary before the test.

Exercise 11

1. would like to book
2. Would you pass
3. would rather stay
4. would buy
5. would have visited
6. would clear
7. would send
8. would recommend practising
9. Would you like
10. would prefer

Exercise 12

1. would like
2. would you
3. would prefer
4. would rather
5. would be
6. would recommend
7. would call
8. would have

Note on Exercise 7: Both means that both used to and would are possible because the sentence describes a repeated past action and the past time is established. For past states such as be, have, own, believe and dislike, used to is normally required.