

THE CONDITIONAL

The Conditional

The Conditional is a special form of the verb in French used for talking about an imaginary situation in the Future. It corresponds directly to the English form using the auxiliary **would**. In French it is often dependent on another clause introduced by the conjunction **si** which has a verb in the Imperfect.

- Si je gagnais la loterie nationale j'achèterais une maison en France.
- Je vous le dirais si je savais.

It is formed in a way very similar to the Future Tense to which it is related.

Forming the Conditional

We form the conditional by adding endings to a stem. To get the stem:

For 'ER' and 'IR' verbs use the infinitive e.g.

regarder écouter finir sortir

For 'RE' verbs simply remove the 'e' from the end of the infinitive e.g.

prendr(e) descendr(e)

It is to this stem that we must add the appropriate ending. Here is one example of a regular verb and a list of verbs with irregular stems.

TRAVAILLER	IRREGULAR VERB	STEM
je travaillerais	être	ser
tu travaillerais	avoir	aur
il/elle travaillerait	aller	ir
nous travaillerions	faire	fer
vous travailleriez	vouloir	voudr
ils/elles travailleraient	pouvoir	pourr
	devoir	devr
	acheter	achèter
	venir	viendr

There are many other ways of expressing conditionals both in French and in English. The Tenses used normally reveal the degree of likelihood of the condition being fulfilled. Here are the patterns with an example in each case.

LIKELIHOOD	SI CLAUSE	MAIN CLAUSE
CERTAIN/LIKELY	PRESENT	PRESENT
	S'il pleut nous restons chez nous	
PROBABLE	PRESENT	FUTURE
	S'il fait beau nous irons à la plage.	
UNLIKELY/CONTRARY TO FACT	IMPERFECT	CONDITIONAL
	Je t'aiderais si je pouvais	
IMPOSSIBLE	PLU PERFECT	THE PAST CONDITIONAL
	S'il était venu nous aurions dîné ensemble.	

English for translation into French.

1. I would prefer to live in France.
2. That would be great!
3. We would like some wine please.
4. She would like a beer.
5. Could you check the oil?
6. I ought to go now.
7. If they won some money they would retire.
8. He would leave if he could.
9. I wouldn't swim in this lake.
10. We'll take the car if you want.
11. If you read the paper you would know what is happening in the world.
12. If you buy the drinks I'll pay for the meal.
13. If he had change he would pay.
14. I would have done anything for her.
15. I wouldn't do that if I were you.
16. He wouldn't have recognized me.
17. If we had known we wouldn't have come.
18. If I were you I would leave straight away.
19. He will be so pleased if you call him.
20. That would have been very difficult.
21. If she had seen us she would have said hallo.
22. I won't wait if you're late.
23. If you're going I'm going too.
24. I didn't think they would ask.
25. If I understand what you are saying you don't want to see him again.

English for translation into French.

1. Je préférerais habiter en France.
2. Ça serait fantastique!
3. Nous voudrions du vin s'il vous plait.
4. Elle voudrait une bière.
5. Pourriez-vous vérifier l'huile?
6. Je devrais partir maintenant.
7. Si elles gagnaient de l'argent elles prendraient leur retraite.
8. Il partirait s'il pouvait.
9. Je ne me baignerais pas dans ce lac.
10. Nous prendrons la voiture si tu veux.
11. Si vous lisiez le journal vous sauriez ce qui se passe dans le monde.
12. Si tu paies les boissons moi je payerai le repas.
13. S'il avait de la monnaie il payerait.
14. J'aurais fait n'importe quoi pour elle.
15. Je ne ferais pas ça si j'étais à votre place.
16. Il ne m'aurait pas reconnu.
17. Si nous avions su nous ne serions pas venus.
18. Si j'étais à votre place je partirais tout de suite.
19. Il sera si heureux si tu lui téléphone.
20. Ça aurait été très difficile.
21. Si elle nous avait vus elle aurait dit bonjour.
22. Je n'attendrai pas si tu es en retard.
23. Si vous partez moi je pars aussi.
24. Je ne pensais pas qu'ils demanderaient.
25. Si je te comprends bien tu ne veux pas le revoir.