

Mixed conditionals

Spanish · British English › Spanish

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Mixed Conditional Sentences

Welcome to the world of complex conditional sentences, also known as **mixed conditionals** in Spanish at C1 level! These are advanced grammatical structures that allow us to combine different time frames – the past with the present, or the present with the past – to express hypothetical situations and their consequences. They're incredibly useful for reflecting on past events, expressing regret, or speculating about what might have been if things had unfolded differently.

Mixed conditional sentences differ from the 'pure' types (like Type 2 or Type 3) because their conditional clause (the part starting with **si**) refers to a different time frame than the main clause (which expresses the result). This is precisely what makes them 'mixed' and allows for a much more nuanced expression of thought.

- We use them when the condition (the **si** clause) refers to the past, and the result to the present.
- Or when the condition refers to the present (or a general situation), and the result to the past.
- They help us talk about hypothetical scenarios that are contrary to reality.

Type 1: Past Condition, Present Result

This type expresses how an unrealised past situation would affect the present. We're talking about something that didn't happen in the past, which has consequences for **now**.

Si + **pluscuamperfecto de subjuntivo** (past), **condicional simple** (present)

Si hubieras estudiado más, ahora tendrías mejores notas.

If you had studied more, you would have better grades now.

Tense	Form	Example (hablar)
Pluscuamperfecto de subjuntivo	hubiera/hubiese + participio	Si yo hubiera hablado
Condicional simple	infinitivo + -ía, -ías, -ía...	yo hablaría

Type 2: Present Condition, Past Result

This type allows us to express how a current, unrealised (or general) situation would have affected the past. We're talking about something that isn't true **now**, but which would have had consequences **then**.

Si + **imperfecto de subjuntivo** (present/general), **condicional compuesto** (past)

Si no fuera tan tímido, habría hablado con ella ayer.

If I weren't so shy, I would have spoken to her yesterday.

Tense	Form	Example (comer)
Imperfecto de subjuntivo	-ara/-ase, -ieras/-ieses	Si yo comiera
Condicional compuesto	habría + participio	yo habría comido

Common mistake! Remember, you should never use the **condicional** mood directly after **si**! It will always be **subjuntivo** (either **imperfecto** or **pluscuamperfecto**).

Memory trick: Think of **subjuntivo** as the 'if only' part, and **condicional** as the 'then, this would happen' part. If your 'if only' is about the past, your 'then' is about now. If your 'if only' is about now, your 'then' is about the past.

Habría aceptado el trabajo si no tuviera que mudarme.

I would have accepted the job if I didn't have to move.

Pay close attention to the context and keywords that indicate time (e.g., *ahora, ayer, hoy, el mes pasado*). These will help you identify which type of mixed conditional sentence you need to use. Practise regularly, and you'll master these nuances in no time!

Part 1 – Choose the correct word

Circle the option that correctly fills each gap.

1. Si me _____ ayer, _____ antes el trabajo.

If you had helped me yesterday, I would have finished the work sooner.

Gap 1: A) hubieras ayudado B) ayudarías C) ayudaras D) habrías ayudado

Gap 2: A) habría terminado B) había terminado C) terminé D) terminaré

2. Si lo _____, te _____ enseguida.

If I had seen it, I would have warned you straight away.

Gap 1: A) habría visto B) vería C) hubiera visto D) viera

Gap 2: A) avisaré B) había avisado C) avisé D) habría avisado

3. Si _____ del extranjero hace años, ahora _____ felices en casa.

If they had come back from abroad years ago, they would be living happily at home now.

Gap 1: A) habrían vuelto B) volvieran C) hubieran vuelto D) volverían

Gap 2: A) vivan B) vivirán C) vivirían D) habrían vivido

4. Si lo _____ bien, no _____ ese error.

If you had thought it through, you wouldn't have made that mistake.

Gap 1: A) hubieras pensado B) habrás pensado C) habrías pensado D) pensabas

Gap 2: A) habrías cometido B) cometerás C) cometiste D) habías cometido

5. Si _____ la tienda hace un año, ahora _____ más clientes.

If they had opened the shop a year ago, they would have more customers now.

Gap 1: A) abrieran B) hubieran abierto C) habrían abierto D) abrirían

Gap 2: A) tendrán B) habrían tenido C) tengan D) tendrían

6. Si me _____ el mes pasado, te _____ enseguida.

If you had written to me last month, I would have replied straight away.

Gap 1: A) hubieras escrito B) escribieras C) escribirías D) habrías escrito

Gap 2: A) contestaré B) había contestado C) habría contestado D) contesté

7. Si _____, ahora _____ del concierto.

If we had gone, we would be enjoying the concert now.

Gap 1: A) hubiéramos ido B) habíamos ido C) habríamos ido D) vamos

Gap 2: A) estamos disfrutando B) estaremos disfrutando C) estaríamos disfrutando D) estuviéramos disfrutando

8. Si _____ los medios, _____ un nuevo puente hace años.

If they had had the means, they would have built a new bridge years ago.

Gap 1: A) tuvieron B) habían tenido C) habrían tenido D) hubieran tenido

Gap 2: A) construirían B) habían construido C) habrán construido D) habrían construido

Part 2 – Fill in the gap

Write the missing word or phrase on the line.

1. Si me lo _____ ayer, ahora no _____ de ti.

If you had shown it to me yesterday, I wouldn't doubt you now.

2. Si _____ la oferta en enero, _____ muchas complicaciones.

If we had turned down the offer in January, we would have avoided a lot of complications.

3. Si _____ la solución, _____ el conflicto hace años.

If they had had the solution, they would have resolved the conflict years ago.

4. Si no lo _____ en casa esta mañana, ahora _____ el documento.

If you hadn't forgotten it at home this morning, you would have the document now.

5. Si no lo _____ esta mañana, _____ en problemas ahora.

If I hadn't found it this morning, we would be in trouble now.

6. Si ayer no _____ que terminar a las ocho, _____ la charla hasta medianoche.

If we hadn't had to finish at eight yesterday, we would have carried on talking until midnight.

Part 3 – Translate

Write each word in Spanish on the line.

1. to close › _____

2. achieve › _____

3. try › _____

4. to give › _____

5. to come › _____

6. to go › _____

Part 4 – Match the pairs

Write the letter of the matching translation next to each term.

Term	Translation
1. esperar	A to recommend
2. permitir	B to wait
3. recordar	C promise
4. morir	D to trust



- | | | | |
|----|------------|---|----------|
| 5. | confiar | E | remember |
| 6. | recomendar | F | allow |
| 7. | querer | G | to want |
| 8. | prometer | H | to die |

Answer Key

Part 1 – Choose the correct word

- Gap 1: A) hubieras ayudado; Gap 2: A) habría terminado
- Gap 1: C) hubiera visto; Gap 2: D) habría avisado
- Gap 1: C) hubieran vuelto; Gap 2: C) vivirían
- Gap 1: A) hubieras pensado; Gap 2: A) habrías cometido
- Gap 1: B) hubieran abierto; Gap 2: D) tendrían
- Gap 1: A) hubieras escrito; Gap 2: C) habría contestado
- Gap 1: A) hubiéramos ido; Gap 2: C) estaríamos disfrutando
- Gap 1: D) hubieran tenido; Gap 2: D) habrían construido

Part 2 – Fill in the gap

- hubieras mostrado; dudaría
- hubiéramos rechazado; habríamos evitado
- hubieran tenido; habrían resuelto
- hubieras olvidado; tendrías
- hubiera encontrado; estaríamos
- hubiéramos tenido; habríamos continuado

Part 3 – Translate

- cerrar
- conseguir
- probar
- dar
- venir
- ir

Part 4 – Match the pairs

- B (to wait)
- F (allow)
- E (remember)
- H (to die)
- D (to trust)
- A (to recommend)
- G (to want)
- C (promise)