

A

We use **would** ('d) / **wouldn't** when we *imagine* a situation or action (= we think of something that is not real):

- ☐ It **would be** nice to buy a new car, but we can't afford it.
- ☐ I'd **love** to live by the sea.
- ☐ A: Shall I tell Chris what happened?
B: No, I **wouldn't say** anything.
(= I wouldn't say anything in your situation)



We use **would have (done)** when we imagine something that didn't happen in the past:

- ☐ They helped us a lot. I don't know what we'd **have done** without their help.
(we'd have done = we **would** have done)
- ☐ It's a shame you didn't see the film. You **would have liked** it.
- ☐ I didn't tell Sam what happened. He **wouldn't have been** pleased.

Compare **would (do)** and **would have (done)**:

- ☐ I **would call** Lisa, but I don't have her number. (*now*)
I **would have called** Lisa, but I didn't have her number. (*past*)
- ☐ I'm not going to invite them to the party. They **wouldn't come** anyway.
I didn't invite them to the party. They **wouldn't have come** anyway.

We often use **would** in sentences with **if** (see Units 38–40):

- ☐ I **would call** Lisa **if** I had her number.
- ☐ I **would have called** Lisa **if** I'd had her number.

B

Compare **will ('ll)** and **would ('d)**:

- ☐ I'll **stay** a little longer. I've got plenty of time.
I'd **stay** a little longer, but I really have to go now. (so I can't stay longer)
- ☐ I'll **call** Lisa. I have her number.
I'd **call** Lisa, but I don't have her number. (so I can't call her)

Sometimes **would/wouldn't** is the past of **will/won't**.

Compare:

<i>present</i>		<i>past</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> TOM: I'll call you on Sunday.	→	Tom said he'd call me on Sunday.
<input type="checkbox"/> AMY: I promise I won't be late.	→	Amy promised that she wouldn't be late.
<input type="checkbox"/> LISA: Oh, no! The car won't start .	→	Lisa was annoyed because her car wouldn't start .

Somebody **wouldn't do** something = he/she refused to do it:

- ☐ I tried to warn him, but he **wouldn't listen** to me. (= he refused to listen)
- ☐ The car **wouldn't start**. (= it 'refused' to start)

C

You can also use **would** to talk about things that happened regularly in the past:

- ☐ When we were children, we lived by the sea. In summer, if the weather was fine, we **would** all get up early and go for a swim. (= we did this regularly)
- ☐ Whenever Richard was angry, he **would** walk out of the room.

With this meaning, **would** is similar to **used to** (see Unit 18):

- ☐ Whenever Richard was angry, he **used to walk** out of the room.

Exercises

36.1 Write sentences about yourself. Imagine things you would like or wouldn't like.

- 1 (a place you'd love to live) *I'd love to live by the sea.*
- 2 (a job you wouldn't like to do)
- 3 (something you would love to do)
- 4 (something that would be nice to have)
- 5 (a place you'd like to go to)

36.2 Complete the sentences using *would* + the following verbs (in the correct form):

be be do do enjoy enjoy have stop

- 1 They helped us a lot. I don't know what we *would have done* without their help.
- 2 You should go and see the film. I think you it.
- 3 It's a pity you couldn't come to the party last night. You it.
- 4 Shall I apply for the job or not? What you in my position?
- 5 I was in a hurry when I saw you. Otherwise I to talk.
- 6 We took a taxi home last night, but got stuck in the traffic. It quicker to walk.
- 7 Why don't you go and see Clare? She very pleased to see you.
- 8 In an ideal world, everybody enough to eat.

36.3 Each sentence on the right follows a sentence on the left. Which follows which?

- 1 I'd like to go to Australia one day.
- 2 I wouldn't like to live on a busy road.
- 3 I'm sorry your trip was cancelled.
- 4 I'm looking forward to going out tonight.
- 5 I'm glad we didn't go out in the rain.
- 6 I'm not looking forward to the trip.

- a It wouldn't have been very nice.
- b It would have been fun.
- c ~~It would be nice.~~
- d It won't be much fun.
- e It wouldn't be very nice.
- f It will be fun.

- 1 *c*
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

36.4 Write sentences using *promised* + *would*/*wouldn't*.

- 1 I wonder why Laura is late. *She promised she wouldn't be late.*
- 2 I wonder why Steve hasn't called me. He promised
- 3 Why did you tell Amy what I said? You
- 4 I'm surprised they didn't wait for us. They

36.5 Complete the sentences. Use *wouldn't* + a suitable verb.

- 1 I tried to warn him, but he *wouldn't listen* to me.
- 2 I asked Amanda what had happened, but she me.
- 3 Paul was angry about what I'd said and he to me for two weeks.
- 4 Martina insisted on carrying all her luggage. She me help her.

36.6 Complete the sentences using *would* (section C). Choose from these verbs:

forget shake share smile stay ~~walk~~

- 1 Whenever Richard was angry, he *would walk* out of the room.
- 2 We used to live next to a railway line. Every time a train went past, the house
- 3 Katherine was always very generous. She didn't have much, but she what she had with everyone else.
- 4 You could never rely on Joe. It didn't matter how many times you reminded him to do something, he always
- 5 When we were children, we used to go to the beach a lot. We there all day playing in the sand and swimming in the sea.
- 6 Lucy was always friendly. Whenever I saw her, she always and say hello.