

Der Konjunktiv II
Deutsch 3
Kapitel 3
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from the website <http://www.dartmouth.edu/%7Egerman/Grammatik/Subjunctive/KonjunktivII.html>

The **present tense of Subjunctive II** is derived from the imperfect tense of the indicative. For weak (regular) verbs, the subjunctive II is identical to the imperfect tense. For strong (irregular) verbs, the present tense of the subjunctive II takes the past tense stem of the imperfect, adds an umlaut where possible, and adds the following endings:

		-e	-en		
		-est	-et		
		-e	-en		
	sein		haben		werden
wäre	wären	hätte	hätten	würde	würden
wärest	wäret	hättest	hättet	würdest	würdet
wäre	wären	hätte	hätten	würde	würden

Some exceptions include:

Imperfect Subjunctive II

brachte	brächte
dachte	dächte
durfte	dürfte
konnte	könnte
mochte	möchte
sollte	sollte
wollte	wollte
mußte	müßte
hatte	hätte
wußte	wüßte

The **past tense of Subjunctive II** is derived from the past perfect tense of the indicative. It is composed of a form of the subjunctive of sein or haben and a past participle.

Conditional sentences

These sentences are based on an if... then (wenn... dann) pattern in both English and German. Dann can be omitted in these sentences also. Remember that wenn is a subordinating conjunction, and forces the conjugated verb to the end of the clause.

Present Subj. II: Wenn ich Zeit **hätte**, (dann) **ginge** ich ins Kino. If I had time, (then) I would go to the movies.

Past Subj. II: Wenn ich Zeit **gehabt hätte**, dann **wäre** ich ins Kino **gegangen**. If I had had time, (then) I would have gone to the movies.

Wenn clauses may be introduced by a verb, and in this case, **wenn** disappears and dann may be replaced by so.

Kommt er heute nicht, (**so**) kommt er morgen. If he's not coming today, then he'll come tomorrow.

A conditional sentence may begin with the *dann clause* as well; but **dann** is never used and the clause uses normal word order.

Wir trinken den Kaffee nicht, wenn er zu heiß ist. We don't drink coffee if it is too hot.

Forms of **würden** + an infinitive

Würde and an infinitive translate to would + infinitive and is more common than the one word form in the *dann clause*. *Wenn clauses* tend to avoid the würde construction, except with these eight verbs: helfen, stehen, sterben, werfen, brennen, kennen, nennen, and rennen. These eight verbs use the würde construction in the *wenn clause* because the one word forms are archaic. Moreover, conversational German tends to replace many subjunctive II forms of strong verbs with the würde construction. However, this construction cannot be used with modal auxiliaries, haben or sein.

Wenn ich Zeit hätte,	dann ginge ich ins Kino. dann würde ich ins Kino gehen .	If I had time, I would go to the movies.
Wenn ich Geld hätte,	dann flöge ich nach Deutschland. dann würde ich nach Deutschland fliegen .	If I had money, I would fly to Germany.

from the website <http://crab.rutgers.edu/%7Erushing/subjunctive.html>

Unusual irregulars.

A very few strong verbs have irregular subjunctives: *helfen* - *hülfe*, *sterben* - *stürbe*, *werfen* - *würfe*. For *helfen*, *hülfe* is also used. *Stehen* can be either *stände* or *stünde*.

Mixed verbs.

Umlaut the stem vowel of the simple past. But for *brennen*, *kennen*, *nennen*, *senden*, *wenden* and similar verbs, spell the altered vowel as *e*, not *ä*.

Examples: *denken* - *dächte*, *bringen* - *brächte*, but *brennen* - *brennte*, *nennen* - *nennte*.

from the website <http://www.nthuleen.com/teach/grammar/konjunktivexpl.html>

Common Ways to Use the Subjunctive

a) IF-THEN CLAUSES and conditional statements. Using the conjunction *wenn* to mean "if", these sentences use the subjunctive in both clauses.

Wenn ich Zeit <u>hätte</u> , <u>würde</u> ich lesen.	<i>If I had time, I would read.</i>
Wenn er <u>spräche</u> , <u>würde</u> ich nicht zuhören.	<i>If he spoke, I wouldn't listen.</i>
Wenn du dich beeilen <u>würdest</u> , <u>könnten</u> wir anfangen.	<i>If you hurried, we could start.</i>
Ich <u>würde</u> kommen, wenn du mich einladen <u>würdest</u> .	<i>I would come if you invited me.</i>

Note 1: While English cannot normally use "would + infinitive" in the if-clause, in German you can use the *würde*-form OR the true subjunctive form of the verb in both the "if" and the "then" clause. It is more common to see the *würde*-form in the "then" clause (like English), but both are grammatically correct.

Note 2: You will occasionally see these "if-then" statements without the conjunction *wenn*. For example: *Hätte ich Zeit, käme ich mit* (= "Had I time, I would come"). In that case, ellipsis occurs, so that the verb is placed first. (You aren't required to know this, but it will come up if you continue on to German 203.)

b) WISHES. The phrase "wenn ich nur" means "If only I ..." and needs the subjunctive. Also, the phrase "ich wünschte" means "I wish ..." and also requires the subjunctive.

Wenn ich nur Spanisch sprechen <u>könnte</u> !	<i>If only I could speak Spanish!</i>
Wenn es nur regnen <u>würde</u> !	<i>If only it would rain.</i>
Ich wünschte, ich <u>hätte</u> mehr Erfahrung.	<i>I wish I had more experience.</i>
Wir wünschten, dass er kommen <u>würde</u> .	<i>We wish he would come.</i>

c) CONTRARY TO FACT statements, irreality. When expressing what would happen, but is not actually happening, the subjunctive is needed. We almost always use "would" for this in English.

Ich <u>würde</u> meine Hausaufgaben machen, aber es ist schon Mitternacht.	<i>I would do my homework, but it's already midnight.</i>
Er <u>käme</u> mit, aber er muss das Haus aufräumen.	<i>He would come along, but he has to clean the house.</i>

d) POLITE REQUESTS. This is a very common use of the subjunctive in both English and German. The subjunctive in these types of requests can be *würde* + infinitive, or a modal verb or *hätte*.

<u>Würden</u> Sie mir bitte helfen? (not: Helfen Sie mir bitte! = imperative)	<i>Would you help me, please?</i> (not: Help me, please! = imperative)
<u>Könnten</u> Sie mir sagen, wo die Post ist? (not: Können Sie mir sagen ... = indicative)	<i>Could you tell me where the post office is?</i> (not: Can you tell me ... = indicative)
<u>Hätten</u> Sie Zeit, mit mir zu sprechen? (not: Haben Sie Zeit ... = indicative)	<i>Might you have time to speak with me?</i> (not: Do you have time ... = indicative)
Ich <u>möchte</u> eine Tasse Kaffee. (not: Ich will eine Tasse Kaffee = indicative)	<i>I would like a cup of coffee.</i> (not: I want a cup of coffee = indicative)