**Grammar Lesson**

**THE THIRD CONDITIONAL**

A conditional is used to talk about a possible or imaginary situation (the condition) and the consequences (or the result) of it.

**The third conditional - meaning**
We use the third conditional when we want to imagine a different past to that which actually occurred. In this episode of the flatmates, Sophie says the following to Alice.
**"We wouldn't have had anywhere near such a good Christmas if you hadn't been there to cook the turkey!"**

The real situation in the past was that Alice cooked the turkey and everybody had a good Christmas. When Sophie speaks, she imagines how the past would have been different, if Alice had not been there and had not cooked the turkey.

The third conditional gives the imaginary result, or consequence, of an unreal past.

**The third conditional - form**
A basic conditional sentence has two clauses, namely the condition and the consequence. In the following example, the condition is the first clause and the consequence is the second clause.
If you hadn't been there, we wouldn't have enjoyed Christmas so much.

For the condition: If + past perfect
For the consequence: would + have done (the perfect infinitive)
For example:
**If** we **had left** the house earlier, we **would have** caught the train.
**If** he **hadn't been** so lazy, he **wouldn't have** failed his exam.
It is possible to put the consequence before the condition. In that case, we do not usually separate the clauses with a comma.
We **would have caught** the train **if we had left** the house earlier.
He **wouldn't have failed** his exam **if he hadn't been so lazy.**

**Would or might?**
We use **would** to show that we are certain about the consequence. If we are not certain about the consequence we can use **might**.
If he had studied harder, he **would** have passed the exam.
If he had studied harder, he **might** have passed the exam.
**If only ...**
We often use 'if only + past perfect' to express a strong regret about the past.
**If only** I had studied harder.

**The third conditional - a variation**
The basic third conditional expresses an imagined past result of an unreal past condition.
**If I had studied harder, I would have passed the exam.**
In that situation, the reality is that the person did not study hard, and he or she failed the exam.

However, sometimes the imagined result could be true now, at the moment of speaking.

For example,
**If I hadn't gone to university, I wouldn't be a teacher now.**
In that situation, the reality is that the person did go to university, and he or she is a teacher now.

If the imagined result, or consequence, could be true now, we use 'would do', not 'would have done'. But, because the condition is still an unreal past, we use the past perfect after 'if'.
**If** I **hadn't gone** to university, I **wouldn't be** a teacher now.
**If** Alice **had stayed** in the flat over Christmas, she **wouldn't know** Sophie.


**Contractions**
It is common to use contractions with this language, particularly when it is spoken.
If **I'd** studied harder, **I'd** have passed the exam
If we use the negative forms - **hadn't**, **wouldn't** - we do not usually contract 'had' and 'would'.
#skypeclass