

Konjunktiv II

The **Konjunktiv** (subjunctive) is a verb mood, not a verb tense.

It is telling you that a statement is not just a plain fact (the "indicative"), but either an (indirect) quotation or a hypothetical situation.

There are two forms: Konjunktiv I and Konjunktiv II.

Konjunktiv I is mostly used for indirect quotations (indirect speech, *indirekte Rede*). Konjunktiv II is used for hypothetical situations.

Konjunktiv II (hypothetical situations)

The Konjunktiv II is used as the general subjunctive: expressing hypothetical situations. (Examples for that in English would be: If I were you, I wouldn't do that. Let's pretend that we were wizards.)

In German, the Konjunktiv II is based on the **simple past** (Präteritum) form of the verb. In fact, in case of **weak verbs** the Konjunktiv II is indistinguishable from the simple past form.

In case of strong verbs, an **Umlaut** (¨) is added to the vowels a, o, u and an **-e** (if there isn't one already) or **-en** in the plural (followed by the regular simple past endings).

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| sein | to be (infinitive) |
| war | was (simple past) |
| wäre | would be/were (subjunctive II) |
| haben | to have (infinitive) |
| hatte | had (simple past) |
| hätte | would have/had (subjunctive II) |
| mögen | to like (infinitive) |
| mochte | liked (simple past) |
| möchte | would like (subjunctive II) |
| gehen | to go (infinitive) |
| ging | went (simple past) |
| ginge | would go/gone (subjunctive II) |

Exception: The modals *sollen* and *wollen* do NOT add an Umlaut in the subjunctive (ich wollte, ich sollte).

Examples:

Ich kaufte dieses Buch, wenn ich Englisch lesen könnte.

Ich brächte ein Geschenk, wenn die Geschäfte nicht zu hätten.

Wenn ich dieses Lied wüsste, sänge ich es.

Wenn es nicht regnete, gingen wir wandern.

IMPORTANT

are the Konjunktiv II forms for **haben**, **sein** and the modal verbs, as here the “würde + infinitiv substitution” is never used:

| ich/er | du | wir/sie | ihr |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|------------|
| hätte | hättest | hätten | hättet |
| wäre | wärest | wären | wäret |
| dürfte | dürftest | dürften | dürftet |
| könnte | könntest | könnten | könntet |
| müßte | müßtest | müßten | müßtet |
| sollte | solltest | sollten | solltet |
| wollte | wolltest | wollten | wolltet |
| würde | würdest | würden | würdet |

THE “WÜRDE” + INFINITIVE SUBSTITUTION

Although technically every German verb has a subjunctive form, in practice a substitution is preferred using **würde + Infinitive**:

instead of **ginge** (would go) **würde gehen** (would go).

Wenn das Wetter schön wäre, **gingen** wir zum Strand.

Wenn das Wetter schön wäre, **würden** wir zum Strand **gehen**.

OTHER TENSES

The Subjunctive II is a verb mood, not a tense. The subjunctive can be used in any tense, present, past, or future. To form the various tenses in the subjunctive, the verbs *haben*, *sein*, and *werden* (in their subjunctive forms) are used to form a compound tense.

Here are a few examples:

Hättest du Lust, mit uns zu gehen?

Do you feel like going with us? (present tense)

Ich wäre gern mit euch gegangen.

I would have liked to go with you guys. (past tense)

Wenn sie kein Geld gehabt hätte, wäre sie nicht nach Asien gefahren.

If she had not had the money, she wouldn't have gone to Asia. (past)

Ich würde es kaufen, wenn...

I would buy it if... (future/conditional)