

Modals in the Past

1. How *Modals in the Past* work

Past modals are used to analyze or interpret **what may have happened in the past**.

They are very common when people:

- interpret events
- speculate about causes
- judge decisions
- reconstruct situations

Structure:

Structure	Example
modal + have + past participle	She might have forgotten the meeting.

Speculation about the past

Used when we are **not sure what happened**.

Modal	Meaning	Example
might have	possible	He might have missed the train.
may have	possible (slightly more formal)	She may have left early.
could have	possible explanation	They could have taken another route.

Example meaning:

He might have forgotten.

→ It's a possible explanation.

Strong logical conclusion

Used when the evidence suggests something **very likely happened**.

Modal

Example

must have

He must have worked late last night.

Example:

The lights were on all night.

He **must have forgotten** to turn them off.

Criticism or regret

Used when judging **something that was possible but did not happen**.

Modal

Example

should have

You should have called me earlier.

could have

We could have finished earlier.

Examples:

You should have told me.

→ criticism

We could have left earlier.

→ missed opportunity

Key comparison

Modal	Meaning
might / may / could have	speculation
must have	strong logical conclusion
should have	criticism or regret
could have	missed possibility

2. Example Sentences

Translate every sentence to Portuguese, even if you need help from Google Translate.
But one important thing: focus on translating the idea not word by word :)

Write after the pink arrow.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. He might have forgotten the meeting.
→ | 7. He must have been exhausted after the marathon.
→ |
| 2. She may have left the office early.
→ | 8. Someone must have eaten the last slice of pizza.
→ |
| 3. They could have taken the wrong train.
→ | 9. They could have gone home already.
→ |
| 4. He must have worked very late.
→ | 10. I should have listened to your advice.
→ |
| 5. She must have misunderstood the instructions.
→ | 11. You should have told me the truth.
→ |
| 6. They could have won the game if they had scored the penalty. 😞
→ | 12. I might have made a mistake.
→ |

13. They must have been very tired.



17. They might have taken the wrong bus.



14. We should have double-checked the numbers.



18. They must have arrived early because the lights were already on.



15. She must have practiced a lot.



19. She should have worn a jacket.



16. He might have forgotten the deadline.



20. I could have explained it better.



3. Atividades

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Phrasal Verbs

1. How *Phrasal Verbs* work

At advanced levels, phrasal verbs become a marker of **linguistic identity**. Native speakers rely on them constantly to express:

- subtle attitudes
- analytical thinking
- negotiation of ideas
- social positioning
- professional reasoning

Using phrasal verbs naturally signals **high fluency**, because speakers choose them instead of more formal Latinate verbs.

Example contrast:

Formal verb	Natural spoken English
investigate	look into
tolerate	put up with
continue	carry on
resolve	sort out
discover	find out

Particles and their typical meanings

Particles often add **conceptual meaning** rather than literal direction.

Particle	Typical idea	Example	Meaning
up	completion / intensification	finish up	complete something
out	discovery / clarity	find out	discover
off	separation / stopping	cut off	stop suddenly
on	continuation	carry on	continue
down	reduction / analysis	break down	analyze
through	process / endurance	work through	deal with something step by step
back	resistance / return	push back	resist
away	disappearance / removal	throw away	discard
over	recovery / review	go over	review
around	avoidance / alternative path	get around	bypass

These patterns help advanced speakers **predict phrasal verbs more easily**.

Example:

break → break **down** → analyze

figure → figure **out** → discover

Advanced phrasal verbs for natural speech

Here's a long list of phrasal verbs. :)

Phrasal Verb	Meaning	Example
bring up	introduce a topic	She brought up an interesting point.
figure out	understand / solve	We need to figure out what happened.
point out	highlight	He pointed out a problem.
back up	support with evidence	Can you back that up?
come up with	create an idea	She came up with a solution.
work through	deal with step by step	We worked through the issues.
sort out	organize or resolve	We'll sort it out later.
rule out	eliminate a possibility	We can't rule that out yet.
carry out	execute a task	The team carried out the experiment.

break down	analyze into parts	Let's break the issue down.
lay out	explain clearly	She laid out the strategy.
follow up	continue communication	I'll follow up tomorrow.
bring about	cause something	The reform brought about change.
phase out	gradually eliminate	They're phasing out the old model.
scale up	expand operations	The company plans to scale up production.
step in	intervene	Management stepped in.
push back	resist	Employees pushed back against the idea.
build on	develop further	Let's build on that idea.
iron out	resolve small problems	We need to iron out some details.
narrow down	reduce options	We narrowed the options down.
come across	seem / appear	He came across as confident.
get at	imply indirectly	What are you getting at?
brush up on	review knowledge	I need to brush up on my statistics.
run into	encounter unexpectedly	I ran into a former colleague.

2. Example Sentences

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Write after the pink arrow.

21. She brought up an interesting question

during the meeting.



28. The investigation ruled out several possibilities.



22. She brought an interesting question up

during the meeting.



29. The team carried out a large-scale experiment.



23. He pointed a major flaw out in the

proposal.



30. The team carried out a large-scale experiment.



24. Can you back up that claim with data?



31. She laid out the strategy clearly.



25. Can you back up that claim with data?



32. I'll follow up with the client tomorrow.



26. We worked through several

complicated issues.



33. The reform brought about major structural changes.



27. Let's sort out the details later.



34. The company is phasing out outdated technologies.



38. Let's build on the ideas from the previous meeting.



35. The startup plans to scale up operations next year.



39. We still need to iron out a few logistical issues.



36. Management stepped in to resolve the conflict.



40. We narrowed down the candidates to three finalists.



37. Several employees pushed back against the decision.



3. Atividades

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Wish and If Only

1. How *Wish and If Only* work

Both **wish** and **if only** express **strong emotions about reality**, especially:

- regret
- frustration
- nostalgia
- reflection

They describe situations where **reality is different from what we want**.

Wish (regret or dissatisfaction)

Wish is commonly used to express that something **is not the way we want it to be**.

Structure	Meaning	Example
wish + past simple	present situation we want to change	I wish I had more time.
wish + past perfect	regret about the past	I wish I had studied harder.
wish + would	frustration with behavior	I wish he would stop interrupting.

Examples:

Situation	Sentence
I don't have time	I wish I had more time.
I didn't travel	I wish I had traveled more.
He keeps interrupting	I wish he would stop interrupting.

If only (stronger emotion)

If **only** has the same grammar as **wish**, but expresses **stronger emotion**, often:

- regret
- desperation
- nostalgia

Structure	Example
if only + past simple	If only I knew the answer.
if only + past perfect	If only I had listened to you.
if only + would	If only he would call me.

Examples:

- If only I had taken that opportunity.
- If only we had more time.
- If only she would listen.

Difference in tone

Structure	Tone
wish	neutral regret
if only	stronger emotional regret

Example:

I wish I had taken that job.

If only I had taken that job.

The second sentence sounds **more emotional or dramatic**.

2. Example Sentences

Translate every sentence to Portuguese, even if you need help from Google Translate.
But one important thing: focus on translating the idea not word by word :)

Write after the pink arrow.

41. I wish I had more free time.



48. If only I had listened to your advice.



42. I wish I knew the answer.



49. If only we had started earlier.



43. I wish I had studied harder in college.



50. If only he would answer his phone.



44. I wish he would stop interrupting.



51. If only I knew what to say.



45. I wish the meeting were shorter.



52. If only the weather were better.



46. I wish I had traveled more when I was
younger.



53. If only I had prepared more carefully.



47. If only I had more time to think.



54. If only I had prepared more carefully.



55. If only I had prepared more carefully.



58. I wish the traffic were lighter.



56. I wish I had made a different decision.



59. If only we had more resources.



57. If only I had taken that opportunity.



60. I wish people would be more patient.



3. Atividades

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Mixed Conditionals

1. How *Mixed Conditionals* work

Mixed conditionals combine **different time references** in the same sentence. They allow speakers to analyze **how past events influence the present**, or **how present characteristics explain past outcomes**.

They are commonly used for:

- reflection
- analysis
- counterfactual reasoning
- complex cause-and-effect thinking

Past → Present

A **past event** affects a **present situation**.

Structure:

Structure	Example
If + past perfect, would + base verb	If I had studied medicine, I would be a doctor now.

Meaning:

The past decision changed the present reality.

Example logic:

Past reality

- I didn't study medicine.

Present consequence

- I am not a doctor.

Sentence

- If I had studied medicine, I would be a doctor now.

Present → Past

A **present characteristic** explains a **past result**.

Structure:

Structure	Example
If + past simple, would have + past participle	If I were more organized, I would have finished earlier.

Meaning:

A current trait influenced a past outcome.

Example logic:

Present reality

- I'm not organized.

Past result

- I didn't finish the report.

Sentence

- If I were more organized, I would have finished the report.

Comparing conditional types

Type	Time relationship	Example
Second conditional	present → hypothetical present	If I had more time, I would travel more.
Third conditional	past → hypothetical past	If I had studied more, I would have passed.
Mixed conditional	past ↔ present	If I had studied medicine, I would be a doctor now.

Mixed conditionals allow speakers to **link two different timelines logically**.

2. Example Sentences

Translate every sentence to Portuguese, even if you need help from Google Translate.
But one important thing: focus on translating the idea not word by word :)

Write after the pink arrow.

61. If I had studied engineering, I would
work in that field now.



66. If we had invested earlier, we would
be in a stronger position today.



62. If I had studied engineering, I would
work in that field now.



67. If she were more careful, she wouldn't
have made that mistake.



63. If we had invested earlier, we would
be in a stronger position today.



68. If she were more careful, she wouldn't
have made that mistake.



64. If we had invested earlier, we would
be in a stronger position today.



69. If he were better prepared, he would
have handled the situation differently.



65. If we had invested earlier, we would
be in a stronger position today.



70. If we were more experienced, we
would have avoided that problem.



71. If she had moved abroad earlier, she would speak three languages now.

→

76. If she were more organized, she would have submitted the report on time.

→

72. If she had moved abroad earlier, she would speak three languages now.

→

77. If they had invested in technology earlier, they would be more competitive now.

→

73. If they had expanded earlier, they would dominate the market today.

→

78. If he were more responsible, he wouldn't have missed the deadline.

→

74. If they had expanded earlier, they would dominate the market today.

→

79. If we were better informed, we would have made a different decision.

→

75. If I were more patient, I wouldn't have argued with him yesterday.

→

80. If I had chosen a different career, my life would look very different now.

→

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