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VERBS L14.1 – THE SUBJUNCTIVE 2 (KONJUNKTIV 2)

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WHAT IS THE KONJUNKTIV 2?

The subjunctive is a special form of a verb. In German, it's called "Konjunktiv 2". The Konjunktiv 2 form describes assumptions or unreal things. It is mainly used to imagine or wish for something impossible to get or achieve right now.

In addition, we use the Konjunktiv 2 for polite questions and statements, recommendations, suggestions, and advice.

USE OF THE KONJUNKTIV 2

1. We use the Konjunktiv 2 for polite requests:

- „Ich **hätte** gern noch ein Bier.“
(= polite request/order in a restaurant.)
- „**Würdest** du bitte das Fenster zu **machen**? Mir ist kalt!“
(= polite question/request, asking if someone can/would do something.)

2. We use the Konjunktiv 2 for recommendations and suggestions:

- „Wir **könnten** heute Abend ins Kino **gehen**.“
(= Suggestion for what to do tonight)
- „Du **solltest** für deine Prüfung morgen **lernen**.“
(= Advice, recommendation)

3. We use the Konjunktiv 2 for wishes/dreams:

- „Ich **hätte** gern eine hübsche Freundin.“
(= wish)
- „Ich **wünschte** mir, ich **wäre** jetzt in der Karibik.“
(= dream)

CONSTRUCTION (PRÄSENS - PRESENT TENSE)

1. Put the verb in the Präteritum (= German simple past tense).
2. Change any "a", "o", "u" (that is the second letter in the verb) into: "ä", "ö", "ü".
3. Put an "e" at the end for 1st and 3rd person singular (if it isn't already there).

Präsens

Präteritum

Konjunktiv 2

ich bin	ich war	ich wäre
ich habe	ich hatte	ich hätte

THE MOST IMPORTANT VERBS

	haben	sein	werden	können	sollen
ich	hätte	wäre	würde	könnte	sollte
du	hättest	wär(e)st	würdest	könntest	solltest
er/sie/es	hätte	wäre	würde	könnte	sollte
wir	hätten	wären	würden	könnten	sollten
ihr	hättet	wär(e)t	würdet	könntet	solltet
sie/Sie	hätten	wären	würden	könnten	sollten

"Sollen" is an exception, and the "o" doesn't change into "ö".

CONSTRUCTION WITH "WÜRDEN"

Usually, only the modal verbs, "sein", "haben" and "werden", get their own Konjunktiv 2 form.

We use the form "würden" (as an auxiliary verb) + infinitive form of the main verb for all other verbs.

→ „Ich **ginge** heute ins Kino.“ (rarely used)

→ „Ich **würde** heute ins Kino **gehen**.“

This second way to form the Konjunktiv 2 is the more common version and corresponds to the English "would" + verb. You could theoretically use this version with the modal verbs, "sein" and "haben", as well, but it isn't common and doesn't sound natural at all.

WORD ORDER

Normal Sentences:

	Position 2		End
Ich	würde	ins Kino	gehen.
Ich	ginge	ins Kino.	

Questions:

Position 1			End
Würde	ich	ins Kino	gehen?
Ginge	ich	ins Kino?	

SUMMARY

- The Konjunktiv 2 is used to be polite and express wishes.
- We form it by taking the simple past form, adding an "Umlaut", and adding an "-e" to the end (for 1st and 3rd person singular).
- Only "haben", "sein", "werden", and the modal verbs have their own form. For the rest, we use "würde" + infinitive.

TASK

- Write down some wishes and polite requests!
- Compare it to your own language! Do you also have a special form that is more polite?

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