

## 8B3 Dovere, potere, and volere in the conditional

### Punto di partenza

The verbs *dovere*, *potere*, and *volere* have special meanings in the present and past conditional tenses.

- As you learned in Strutture 8B.1, present conditional forms are often used to soften the force of a request or suggestion. These forms are commonly used with *dovere*, *potere*, and *volere*.

-- **Vorrei** un caffè, per piacere.      *I would like a coffee, please.*  
-- Tina, **potresti** aiutarmi?      *Tina, could you help me?*

- The conditional of **dovere** can be expressed with *should* or *ought to* in English. Its meaning is slightly less forceful than the present indicative, which implies duty or obligation.

-- **Dovreste** fare la fila.      *You should wait in line.*  
-- **Dovete** fare la fila.      *You must wait in line.*

- When used in the past conditional, **dovere** is equivalent to *should have* or *ought to have* in English.

-- Ragazzi, **avreste dovuto** aspettare due ore?      *Guys, should you have waited two hours?*  
-- **Avremmo dovuto** fare la fila. Adesso non ci sono più biglietti!  
*We should have waited in line. Now there are no more tickets!*

- The present conditional of **potere** means *could* or *might*, in contrast to the present indicative *can* or *may*.

--**Potremmo** fare il ponte?      *Could we take a long weekend?*  
--**Possiamo** fare il ponte?      *Can we take a long weekend?*

- When used in the past conditional, **potere** is equivalent to *could have* in English.

--**Avremmo potuto** fare il ponte! Perchè siamo venuti al lavoro?  
*We could have taken a long weekend! Why did we come to work?*  
--**Non avreste potuto** conoscere il nuovo capo. È arrivato oggi.  
*You couldn't have met the new boss. He arrived today.*

- The present conditional of **volere** means *would like*, in contrast to the more direct *want* of the present indicative.

**Vorrei** fare una crociera.      *I would like to go on a cruise.*  
**Voglio** fare una crociera.      *I want to go on a cruise.*

- When used in the past conditional, **volere** is equivalent to *would have liked* in English.

**Avrei voluto** fare una crociera, ma invece, sono andata in montagna.

*I would have like to go on a cruise, but I went to the mountains, instead.*

I miei amici **non avrebbero voluto** fare la crociera ma con me.

*My friends would not have liked to go on a cruise with me.*

- As in the **passato prossimo**, the choice of whether to use **essere** or **avere** with **dovere**, **potere**, and **volere** in the past conditional should be determined by the infinitive that follows it, although the use of **avere** in all cases is becoming more common. Use **avere** if there is no infinitive at all.

Signorina, **avrebbe voluto visitare** i monumenti? *Miss, would you have liked to visit the monuments?*

**Sarebbero potuti andare** in città, ma sono andati in spiaggia. *They could have gone to the city, but they went to the beach.*

**Provalo!** Put **Dovere**, **Potere** or **Volere** in the conditional present or past.

#### Condizionale presente:

	<b>potere</b>	<b>dovere</b>	<b>volere</b>
1. io	_____	dovrei	_____
2. tu	potresti	_____	vorresti
3. Lei/lui/lei	_____	dovrebbe	vorrebbe
4. noi	_____	dovremmo	_____
5. voi	potreste	_____	_____
6. loro	potrebbero	_____	vorrebbero

#### Condizionale passato:

	<b>potere</b>	<b>dovere</b>	<b>volere</b>
7. io	avrei potuto	_____	_____
8. tu	_____	avresti dovuto	avresti voluto
9. Lei/lui/lei	_____	avrebbe dovuto	_____
10. noi	avremmo potuto	_____	avremmo voluto
11. voi	_____	avreste dovuto	_____
12. loro	avrebbero potuto	_____	avrebbero voluto