FORMS OF KONJUNKTIV II

Konjunktiv II (the subjunctive) is a form of the verb that is used in both spoken and written German to indicate actions that are:
- contrary to fact
- wishes
- hypothetical situations
- expressions of politeness
- removed from perceived reality

Konjunktiv II (the subjunctive) is based on the **preterit stem** of the verb. (The preterit is also known as the simple past). There is only one pattern of conjugational endings for all verbs in Konjunktiv II regardless of the category to which each verb belongs.

These endings are:

ich	-e	wir	-en
du	-est	h r	-et
er/sie	-e	sie/Sie	-en

There are three primary categories of verbs in German. Students must memorize which verbs fall into which categories.

"Weak" verbs are those verbs that have no internal changes in any of the forms in any of the tenses. The participles of these verbs always end in "t" and there are never any irregularities in these verbs.

"Strong" verbs are those verbs whose participles end in "n". Many of these verbs have a stem vowel change in present tense. The simple past of these verbs always has an internal change called **ablaut** (change of sound). The participles of many of these verbs also take an ablaut. In other words, these are the verbs with all the changes that are often difficult to learn and to remember. Most of the common verbs in German fall into this category.

"Mixed" verbs are also called "weak irregular" verbs. These are those verbs whose participles end in "t" (as with weak verbs) and which exhibit an ablaut in the preterit and in the participle (as with strong verbs). Only a few verbs in German fall into this category.

WEAK VERBS

Weak verbs have participle ending in "t."
(ex. *gemacht, geglaubt, gearbeitet,* etc.)

The form of Konjunktiv II is identical to the preterit conjugation of these verbs.

The K II is based on the preterit stem.
(preterit stem = verb stem + "t")

Apply the Konjunktiv II endings to the stem.

• Examples:

glauben (infinitive)
glaubt- (preterit stem)
geglaubt (participle)

Take the preterit stem "glaubt-."
Apply the Konj II endings.

ich glaubt*e*
du glaubt*est*
er/sie glaubt*e*
wir glaubt*en*
ihr glaubt*et*
sie/Sie glaubt*en*

arbeiten (infinitive)
arbeitet- (preterit)
gearbeitet (participle)

Start with the preterit stem "arbeitet-."
Then apply the Konjunitv II endings.

ich arbeitet*e*
du arbeitet*est*
er/sie arbeitet*e*
wir arbeit*en*
ihr arbeitet*et*
sie/Sie arbeitet*en*

Other verbs that follow this pattern are:
machen, wohnen, besuchen, reisen, etc.

STRONG VERBS

Strong verbs have participle ending in "n."
(ex. *bekommen, gegessen, gelesen,* etc.)

The K II is based on the preterit stem.
Add umlaut to the stem stem if possibile. (Only those stems whose vowels are *a/o/u* can take umlaut).
o→ö u→ü a→ä

Apply Konjunktiv II endings.

• Examples:

kommen (infinitive)
kam- (preterit stem)
gekommen (participle)

Take the preterit stem "kam-."
Add umlaut (a→ä).
Apply endings.

ich käm*e*
du käm*est*
er/sie käm*e*
wir käm*en*
ihr käm*et*
sie/Sie käm*en*

gehen (infinitive)
ging- (preterit stem)
gegangen (participle)

Take the preterit stem "ging-"
(umlaut only with ä ö ü).
Apply the K II endings.

ich ging*e*
du ging*est*
er/sie ging*e*
wir ging*en*
ihr ging*et*
sie/Sie ging*en*

Other verbs that follow this pattern are:
fahren, sehen, bleiben, heißen, etc.

MIXED VERBS

Mixed (weak irregular) verbs have particple ending in "t" *AND* the stem takes an ablaut.
(ex. *gekannt, gewusst, gebracht,* etc.)

K II is based on the preterit stem.
Add umlaut to the stem vowel only if the stem vowel is „o" or „u" (not „a").
(The stem vowel "a" goes to "e.")
o→ö u→ü a→e
Apply the Konjunktiv II endings.

• Examples:

wissen (infinitive)
wusst- (preterit stem)
gewusst (participle)

Take the preterit stem "wusst-."
Add umlaut (u→ü).
Apply endings.

ich wüsst*e*
du wüsst*est*
er/sie wüsst*e*
wir wüsst*en*
ihr wüsst*et*
sie/Sie wüsst*en*

kennen (infinitive)
kannte- (preterit stem)
gekannt (participle)

Take the preterit stem "kannt-."
The vowel „a" → „e" (not „ä" !).
Apply the K II endings.

ich kennt*e*
du kennt*est*
er/sie kennt*e*
wir kennt*en*
ihr kennt*et*
sie/Sie kennt*en*

Other verbs that follow this pattern:
bringen, denken, senden, etc.