

## If I were you vs. If I had been you

When you describe a hypothetical situation in the past, which is correct?

- (1) If I were you, I would have done that.
- (2) If I had been you, I would have done that.

Personally, I've heard native speakers **speak (1) most of the time**. So it seems to me that at least in spoken English (1) is in use. But I'd like to know if this use is legitimate.

Technically, the phrase "If I were you" is not referring to the past. It's referring to a hypothetical situation in the present or the future (subjunctive). So, again, *technically*, it should be:

- Present/future: (1) If I **were** you, I **would do** that.  
Past: (2) If I **had been** you, I **would have done** that.

However, the subjunctive is kind of falling out of use in modern English, and "if I were you" has become a stock phrase for most people.

As such, it doesn't have to be conjugated, and can stay as you indicated in sentence (1):

- Present/future: (1) If I **were** you, I **would do** that.  
Past: (2) If I **were** you, I **would have done** that.

From: <https://english.stackexchange.com/>

## If I were you vs. If I had been you

Hello helpers, I have a question. Any difference between these two?

**Mack's**

1. If I **were** you, I would have felt the same way.
2. If I **had been** you, I would have felt the same way.

**Answer** by **Matt** Member

If I **were** you, I **would feel** the same way  
(you're talkin' about an action taking place in the immediate present)

If I **had been** you, I **would have felt** the same way (that's past)

**Answer** by **Lucretia** Senior Member

I'm afraid you are wrong, Matt. It's a so-called mixed conditional.

If you are talking about the past, Mack's #1 is correct.  
If you are talking about the present, Matt's #1 is correct.

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From: <https://forum.wordreference.com/threads/if-i-were-you-vs-if-i-had-been-you.277114/>