Verbs - Conditionals

There are two kinds of conditions - real and unreal.

Real

Real conditions are used for possible situations. The present tense is used in the if-clause (or conditional clause) and the future tense is used in the result clause.

If he comes (present) to school, I will give (future) him your message. (It is possible that he will come.)

Unreal

Unreal conditions are used for impossible or unreal situations. In present-time, unreal if-clauses, the past tense is used in the if-clause and would, could, or might plus the simple verb (v) is used in the result clause.

If he studied (past), he could get (could + v) good grades. (He doesn't study.)

If he came to school, I would give him your message.

In present-time unreal if-clauses, the correct form of the verb to be for all persons is were.

If I were rich, I would go to Europe to study.

If I were you, I would study harder.

In past time the past perfect is used in the if-clause and would, could or might have and the past participle are used in the result clause.

If he had come (past perfect to school, I would have given (would + have + past participle) him your message. (He didn't come to school.)