**CONDITIONALS**

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Conditional sentences are made up of two clauses presenting an event. The if- clause expresses the condition for the event in the main clause. In real conditionals, the events are realizable (happen, have happened or are likely to happen) whereas in unreal conditionals, the events are unrealizable (have not happened, are not likely to happen or are imaginary).

* + - 1. **Form**

A conditional sentence is made up of an if-clause expressing the condition for a main (or result) clause.

* *If he works hard, he’ll pass the examination.*
* *If I found a wallet in the street, I would take it to the police.*

It makes no difference if the clauses are reversed:

* *He’ll pass the examination if he works hard.*
* *I would have come to see you if I had known you were ill.*

But in the question form, in formal English, the main clause is always placed first:

* *Will he pass the examination if he works hard?*
* *Would you take a wallet to the police if you found it in the street?*

*‘Then’* is sometimes put before the main clause to emphasize the fact that the main clause is the result of the if-clause.

* If the keys are not hung at the entrance, *then* dad must have taken them.
  + - 1. **Uses of Conditionals**

**2.1. Real Conditionals**

* + 1. **Factual Conditional (Type 0)**

1. It is also called zero conditional. It is used to express a fixed connection existing between two events now and always (If present tense , present tense). Thus, to talk about:
2. General truth and scientific facts.

* *If air expands, it becomes lighter.*
* *If you heat water to 100°C, it boils.*
* *If it is midday in Algeria, it is 2 p.m. in Mecca.*

1. Habits and recurring events.

* *If I come first, I do the cleaning at home.*
* *If Jane travels, she orders a special meal.*

1. It is also used to express a fixed connection that existed between events in the past (If past tense , past tense)

* *If she had a new toy, she was quiet.*
* *If it rained, we went by bus.*

1. The imperative is used in the main clause to make an invitation or to give an instruction or a command that depends on a certain condition.

* *If you come to the countryside, stay with us.*
* *If you want to switch on the computer, press this button.*
* *If the seat belt light is on, don’t leave your seat.*

\*Note that only in factual conditional that *if* can be replaced by *when* since they can have a similar meaning.

* + 1. **Predictive Conditional (Type 1)**

It is also called first conditional. It is used to express a likely connection between one event (if present tense) and another possible event (will), i.e. there’s a real possibility for events to happen.

* *If he doesn’t work hard, he won’t pass the examination.*

*(There is possibility to fail if he doesn’t work hard)*

* *The builders will complete the new school on time if they don’t go on strike.*
* *If he is working, I won’t disturb him****.***
* *If you have all finished, I’ll collect the papers.*

**Variations of Type 1**

1. The most commonly used modal in the main clause is *will*, but it is also possible to use other modals and phrasal verbs such as *can*, *may, must* and *be going to*.

* *If he wins the elections, he’ll improve the living conditions.*
* *If she becomes inspector, she is going to fight crimes.*
* *If you want to improve, you must work hard.*
* *If your car is out of order, you can come with us.*
* *If you don’t register, you may regret.*

1. *Should* can be used when the action or event in the if-clause is more doubtful or unlikely.

* *If it should rain, I’ll stay at home.*

This form is often combined with an imperative:

* *If you should see the teacher, tell her I'll be late.*

**2.2. Unreal Conditionals**

* + 1. **Hypothetical Conditional (Type 2)**

It is also called second conditional. It is used to express an unlikely connection between an imaginary event (if … past tense) and another imaginary event (would+verb), i.e. there’s no possibility for events to happen because they are not real.

* *If I had the keys, I would open the door.*

*(In fact I don’t have the keys so I cannot open the door.*

* *If he passed his `A' levels, he would go to university.*
* *I f she succeeded this examination, she would have great opportunities for a better job.*
* *He would travel elsewhere if he didn’t get this job.*

\*Note that the meaning in the conditional sentences is present even though past tenses are used.

**Variations of Type 2**

1. The most commonly used modal in the main clause is *would,* but it is also possible to use other modals such as *could* and *might.*

* *We could watch tennis this afternoon if the teacher let us out early.*
* *If you came in the summer, you could stay with us and you might even visit monumental places.*

**The subjunctive of the verb `to be'**

1. The past subjunctive of ‘to *be’ (were)* is used in the main clause instead of *was in formal English*. ‘Were’ is used in with all persons.

* *If I were offered a place at the university, I'd take it.*
* *If they were unable to get a grant, they would work in the holidays.*
* *If he were teaching at the moment, he would be taking an English class.*

1. ‘If I were you, I should/would ...’ is used as a way of giving advice:

* *If I were you I would put my child's name down for that school as soon as possible.*
* *If I were you, I wouldn’t travel abroad.*
  + 1. **Counterfactual Conditional (Type 3)**

It is also called third conditional. It is used to express an imaginary connection between events which never happened (If past perfect , would have + past participle) , i.e, there is no possibility for the events to happen because they are imagined in the past and therefore the condition cannot be fulfilled.

* *If I had**known the college was so far away, I wouldn't have gone there.*

*(But in fact I didn’t know and I went)*

* *If John had died young, he wouldn’t have had children.*
* *He would have been top of the class if he had worked harder.*

(He didn't work hard so he wasn't top of the class)

The past perfect continuous tense can also be used in the if-clause:

* *If he had been listening, he would have heard the result of the examination.*

*It is possible to begin the sentence with had.*

* *Had John died young, he wouldn’t have had children.*

**Variations of type 3**

The most commonly used modal in the main clause is *would have,* but it is also possible to use other modals such as *could have* and *might have.*

* *If my elder brother had gone to university, he might have become an architect.* (possibility)
* *If he had become an architect, he could have designed bridges.* (ability)

**2.2. ‘Will’ and ‘Would’ in the if-clause**

*Will* and *would* are not usually used after ‘if’ in conditional sentences, but there are certain exceptions.

* + 1. **Will**

It is used to mean ‘if you insist’ or to make a polite invitation or a request.

* *If you will* *continue working in this bad way, then you will certainly get fired*. (If you insist)
* *If you will* *arrive late, it's not surprising the teacher gets annoyed.*
* *If you will take a seat, I'll try and find the Headmaster.* (invitation)
* *If you will* *open the door, I will put these in .*(request)
  + - * 1. **would**

It is used to express a desired outcome.

* *If you would let me know the answer as soon as possible, I would be most grateful.*
* *If it would* *stop snowing, we would go out and make a snowman.*
  + - * 1. **I wonder if you would /could**

It is another polite way of asking for help.

* *I wonder if you would/could tell the Headmaster that I'm here.*
* *I wonder if he would take a message for me.*
  + - * 1. **‘Won't’ meaning refusal**
* *If he won't learn his lessons, he'll never improve his English.*

**2.3. ‘Unless’ and ‘If only’**

1. **Unless**

Unless is used to mean ‘except if’ or ‘only under the following circumstances’. It sometimes has the same meaning as if … not.

* *He won’t succeed* unless *he works hard.* ( He won’t succeed if he doesn’t work hard.)
* *She won’t come* unless *you invite her.* ( She won’t come if you don’t invite her.)

Unless is not used in counterfactual conditional, when there is a negative cause or reason or when the main clause in started with *then.*

* *If he didn’t have this handicap, he would be very cool. (~~Unless he had this handicap,…~~)*
* *If the keys are not hung at the entrance, then dad must have taken them. (~~Unless the keys are hung….)~~*

1. **‘If only’ and ‘only if’**

‘*If only’* is used in unreal conditionals to indicate a wish or a regret.

* *If only the rain would stop, we could go out to play.* (We wish it would stop.)
* *If only I hadn't wasted my time, I would have got a diploma.* (I regret wasting my time.)

N.B. ‘If only’ often makes the wish or regret sound stronger:

* *I*'*m starving! If only the bell would ring for lunch.* (wish)
* *I'm broke! If only I hadn't spent all my money. (regret)*

*‘Only if’* is used to emphasize a special condition.

* *She won’t come* only if *you invite her.*
* *Call me only if there is an emergency.*