

**MODULE II: Conditionals**

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In grammar, conditionals are used to describe the result of a certain condition. Each conditional sentence has an 'if clause' and a 'main clause'. The **if clause** or the **conditional clause** tells us the condition while the **main clause** or the **result clause** tells us the result.

The order of the clauses is not fixed. You may have to rearrange the pronouns and adjust punctuation when you change the order of the clauses, but the meaning is identical.

1- *If I study harder, I will score better.*

2- *I will score better if I study harder.*

**Factual conditionals** can be timeless (outside time, expressing habits or scientific facts) or time-bound (referring to present, past or different times).

**Future conditionals** can express a strong or weak condition or result (something will happen or may happen) or be used to give advice or commands.

**Imaginative conditionals** can be hypothetical (unlikely but possible in the present or future) or counterfactual (impossible, referring to present or past time). Conditional statements can be used for various purposes, such as:

- To state universal truths, scientific facts, laws & principles in the present tense:

1- *If you bring a magnet close to iron, it attracts.*

2- *If you mix hydrogen and oxygen, you get water.*

- To display an habitual action in the present:

1- *If we make an itinerary first, it facilitates travelling.*

- To show implications:

1- *If you overcook the food, it spoils the taste.*

2- *If we don't leave now, we'll be late.*

- To make inferences about the past:

1- *The trapped workers would have been rescued sooner if she had spearheaded the mission.*

2- *If the British had not colonised India, there wouldn't have been a partition.*

- To make predictions about the future:

1- *If you analyse the results, you will define the problem more clearly.*

2- *If it rains tonight, we will have a clear sky tomorrow.*

- To give commands or to make requests:

1- *If you proceed with the experiment, interpret the findings carefully.*

2- *Turn on some music if you hear the baby cry.*

- Show possible plans or actions:

1- *If you take the shortcut, you may reach the railway station early.*

2- *If we get a chance, we will visit the lake tomorrow.*

- Give advice:

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1- *If you benefit from the study, you should identify the key factors in its success.*

2- *If you follow my instructions, you will solve the puzzle in no time.*

- Show future possibilities:

1- *If you exported the table, it would require too much data.*

2- *If I were to process all this data, I would structure the resulting graph very carefully.*

- Refer to impossible situations in the present:

1- *If Einstein were alive today, he would probably solve the problem.*

2- *If I were a billionaire, I would eliminate world hunger.*

- Refer to impossible situations in the past:

1- *If you had substantiated the argument it would have been more useful.*

2- *If we had booked earlier, we could have got better seats.*

**The Zero Conditional-**

(if/when + present simple >> present simple.)

*If this thing happens, that thing happens.*

A zero conditional sentence consists of two present simple verbs. One is in each, the 'if clause', and the 'main clause'. Both parts of the sentence are in the simple present tense. The present tense signifies that these actions are both possible and typical.

In terms of time, the Zero Conditional talks about actions that happen always or are happening now.

1- *If I am sad, I go shopping.*

2- *If babies get hungry, they cry.*

In terms of **situation**, it talks about general truths. We use the zero conditional when, in general, there is a **guaranteed result**, like **scientific facts**.

1- *If you freeze water, it becomes solid.*

2- *If you add two and three, you get five.*

The **imperative** is in the main clause when it is used to give instructions.

1- *If they ring the doorbell, tell them to come in.*

2- *Call me if you want to catch up later.*

**The First Conditional-**

(if/when + present simple >> will + base verb)

*If this thing happens, that thing will happen*

We use the first conditional when we talk about things which might happen in the future that we believe are real or possible.

1- *If we don't leave now, we will miss the bus.*

2- *If you study hard, you will pass the exam.*

We can't know for sure what will happen in the future, but we can use the first conditional to talk about possible things that could easily come true. We use the first conditional to make statements about the real world, and about particular situations.

1- *I'll die of overeating if I take another bite.*

2- *If it gets warmer, we will take a bath.*

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3- *Nobody will notice if you forget to wear socks.*

You can also use modals in the 'main clause' instead of 'will' to express the degree of certainty or permission, or a recommendation.

Remember that we use the modal verb in the main clause, not in the conditional clause.

if + present simple >> modal verb with future meaning (shall/should/will/would/can/could/may/might)

1- *If we don't leave now, we may miss the bus.*

2- *If you study hard, you can pass the exam.*

3- *I may die of overeating if I take another bite.*

4- *If it gets warmer, we should take a bath.*

5- *India will be top of the league if they win the next game.*

**Note:** Conditionals can be categorized as **real/possible** and **unreal/impossible**.

Zero and first conditionals are **possible** as they deal with things that are generally true or that could be true in the future.

The third conditionals can be classified as **impossible** because they are either hypothetical or concerned with events in the past that we cannot change.

**The Second Conditional**

(if + past simple >> + would + base verb)

1- *if this thing happened, that thing would happen.*

2- *if this thing happened, that thing would be happening.*

We can use it to talk about things in the future that are probably not going to be true. We often use it to talk about fantasies.

We can also use it to talk about something in the present which is impossible. It is very common to say 'If I were' instead of 'if I was'.

1- *If he had the tools, he would build a treehouse.*

2- *I would buy an elephant if I won the lottery.*

3- *If he were more patient, he would solve the puzzle.*

4- *If the weather improved, we could go for a walk*

5- *If I were you, I would complete the registration.*

6- *If I was taller, I would try a hand at basketball.*

In type 2 conditional sentences, the continuous form of the present conditional may be used to talk about something that is impossible. The condition and the result are not taking place in the past, but the past tense is used to indicate the unreal nature of the situation.

1- *If I spoke Japanese, I would be working as a voice artist.*

2- *If I had a day off tomorrow, I'd be resting now.*

In the second conditional, the simple past is used in the condition clause. If the be verb is

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being used, it is typical to use **were** in more formal contexts.

*1- If I were you, I would drink more water.*

**The Third Conditional**

(if + past perfect + modal + have + past participle)

If this thing had happened, that thing would have happened.

We use the third conditional to talk about the past. It's used to describe a situation that didn't happen, and to imagine the result of this imaginary situation.

**Examples:**

*1- If I had studied harder, I would have passed the exam.*

*2- If we had left earlier, we wouldn't have missed the class.*

*3- If the weather had improved, we could have gone for a walk.*

*4- You wouldn't be so tired if you had gone to bed earlier.*

*5- She would have gotten a job if there hadn't been a pandemic.*

*6- I could have earned more money if I had paid attention in the class.*

Some other words that sometimes introduce conditionality

● **As long as**

*1- I'll evaluate the sheets quickly as long as you submit them on time.*

*2- They will complete the exercise tomorrow, as long as good connectivity is available.*

*3- They will finish the project, as long as they receive enough funding.*

● **Given**

*1- I'll evaluate the sheets quickly given that you submit them on time.*

*2- They will complete the exercise tomorrow, given that good connectivity is available.*

*3- They will finish the project, given that they receive enough funding.*

● **Supposing**

*1- I'll evaluate the sheets quickly supposing that you submit them on time.*

*2- They will complete the exercise tomorrow, supposing that good connectivity is available.*

*3- They will finish the project, supposing that they receive enough funding.*

● **Provided that**

*1- I'll evaluate the sheets quickly provided you submit them on time.*

*2- They will complete the exercise tomorrow, provided that good connectivity is available.*

*3- They will finish the project, provided that they receive enough funding.*

● **Unless (if not)**

*1- Unless you submit the sheets on time, I'll not evaluate them quickly.*

*2- They will not complete the exercise tomorrow unless good connectivity is available.*

*3- They will not finish the project unless they receive enough funding.*

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