Conditionals

Conditional sentences can express two kinds of conditions : **real** and **unreal.**

Real conditions:

Type 1 (first conditiona): Real conditions express what is possible. The ***if* clause** is in the **present tense (any present tense, simple, continuous or perfect).** The **other clause** expresses habitual action, **future action**, or **a command/imperative**.

- The *if* clause can occur in any position in the sentence.

> If you **pass** your exam, I **will offer** you a nice bike.

Unreal conditions:

Unreal conditions express something that is not true or is not possible.

Type 2 (second conditional): The second conditional refers to an u**nlikely, impossible or imaginary event in the future.**
- If the sentence is about a present situation, the verb in the ***if* clause** borrows the form of **the past,** (but remember that it represents the present), and the **main clause** uses **would + verb**
- **The second conditional** can also be used to make the speaker **sound indirect/tentative**

In this type of conditional, "was" becomes "were" as it is not a real past action/situation

> If I were ~~(was)~~ you, I would work harder to succeed

However, some non-native speakers use "was" instead of "were". So, if "were" is not given among the choice options, "was" becomes the right/best answer

Type 3 (third conditional): If the situation is about the past, the verb in the ***if* clause** borrows the form of the **past perfect. The main clause** uses **would + have + verb**

> Ex: - If I **owned** the company, I **would accept** the project. (in reality I don't own the company)

> - If I **had owned** the company, I **would have accepted** the project. (in reality I didn't own the company)

The verb *be* can use both *was* and *were* in the *if* clause for a present unreal conditional sentence. This is true **for all persons from *I* to *they*.** Keep in mind that **native speakers of English prefer to use *were*.** They feel it sounds more educated. *Was* is an acceptable alternative, however.

> Ex: - If **I were** the boss, I would take a vacation.
> - If **he were** the boss, he would take a vacation.

In practice, these three conditional structures can be mixed (but this is rare especially in TOEIC)

- If I **spoke** English better (type2), I **wouldn't have had** to pay a translator (type3)
  Si je parlais mieux l'anglais, je n'aurais pas eu à payer un traducteur.
- If we **had bought** petrol at the last service station (type 3), we **wouldn't be** in trouble now (type 2)
  Si nous avion acheté de l'essence à la dernière station service, nous ne serions pas dans la mauvaise situation dans laquelle nous nous trouvons maintenant.

Remember « **will** » and « **would »** are both modals, so they **can be replaced by other modals**
eg. If you hadn't switched the light, you **might** have been electrocuted.

If and Unless :

unless = if not

Example :

Unless business improves, I'll lose my job.

= **If** business **doesn't improve**, I'll lose my job.

Provided, providing that, as long as :

- The expressions providing, provided, and as long as mean « **if and only if ».**

- They emphasise the condition. They have a first and second conditional form