

## EC 4 Conditionals

### *Form – How is the structure formed?*

Form	If-Clause (Condition) verb form:	Main Clause (Result)
If + present, present	present If I <b>get</b> enough sleep,	present I generally <b>feel</b> good.
If + present, will + verb	present If you <b>come</b> to the party,	future you <b>will have</b> fun.
If + past, *would + verb	simple past If I <b>were</b> you,	would + simple form verb I <b>would apologize</b> to her.
If + had + p.p., *would have + p.p.	past perfect If you <b>had studied</b> ,	would have + past participle you <b>would have passed</b> the test.

\*would/could/might are all possible

For example: If I had more money, I would/could/might buy a car.

If she had not moved to New York, she would/could/might not have met her husband.

-- Note the use of "not." "Not" comes after the modal (will not, would not, could not, might not).

The “if” conditional is a dependent clause. It has the following structure:

If       X      , (then)       Y      .  
dependent clause      main clause

However, the structure can also be changed.

      Y       if       X      .  
main clause      dependent clause

If Maria doesn't come to the party, John will be sad.  
dependent clause                      main clause

OR:

John will be sad if Maria doesn't come to the party.  
main clause                      dependent clause

### *Meaning- what does it mean?*

If Maria doesn't come to the party, John will be sad.  
dependent clause                      main clause

John will not be sad, *unless* Maria doesn't come to the party. In other words, Maria not coming to the party, will make John sad. In this case, the dependent clause (If Maria doesn't come to the party) affects the main clause (John will be sad).

More examples:

If I don't get that job, (then) life will be difficult.  
dependent clause                      main clause

If we don't eat good food, (then) we will not feel good.  
dependent clause                      main clause

If Sam comes my office, (then) I can work with him on the project.  
dependent clause                      main clause

In the examples above, the main clause is the result of the dependent clause. This means the main clause will not happen, unless the dependent clause happens.

## Use – when/why is it used?

There are 4 conditionals. Each one is used for different reasons. See the chart below again.

Form	If-Clause (Condition) verb form:	Main Clause (Result)
<b>ZERO CONDITIONAL</b> If + present, present	<b>present</b> If I <b>get</b> enough sleep,	<b>present</b> I generally <b>feel</b> good.
<b>FIRST CONDITIONAL</b> If + present, will + verb	<b>present</b> If you <b>come</b> to the party,	<b>future</b> you <b>will have</b> fun.
<b>SECOND CONDITIONAL</b> If + past, *would + verb	<b>simple past</b> If I <b>were</b> you,	<b>would + simple form verb</b> I <b>would apologize</b> to her.
<b>THIRD CONDITIONAL</b> If + had + p.p., *would have + p.p.	<b>past perfect</b> If you <b>had studied</b> ,	<b>would have + past participle</b> you <b>would have passed</b> the test.

There is a Zero Conditional, First Conditional, Second Conditional, and Third Conditional.

Zero Conditional: Used when the result will always happen. It is used for facts or general truths/general situations.

*Example:*

*Most people gain weight if they eat too much.*

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First Conditional: Used to talk about things that might (or probably will) happen in the future. This conditional describes things that could easily be true. It is used for *specific* situations.

*Example:*

*If it rains, we will cancel the picnic.*

*If he forgets his wife's birthday this year, she will be upset.*

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## Second Conditional:

1. Used to talk about things in the future that will probably NOT happen.

*Example:*

*If I became a famous movie star, I would travel all around the world making movies.  
(I probably will not become a famous movie star.)*

2. Used to talk about things in the present that are impossible because they are not true.

*Example:*

*If I had pasta, I would make spaghetti. (But I don't have pasta, so I can't make spaghetti.)*

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Third Conditional: Used to talk about something that did NOT happen in the PAST and to *imagine* the result.

*Example:*

*If I had woken up earlier, I would not have been late to work. (But I did NOT wake up earlier, so I WAS late to work.)*

For more information on conditionals and practice exercises, go to  
<http://www.englishpage.com/modals/modalintro.html>

