Note to students: Use this sample study guide to help you as you develop your own guide. Please note that all words and examples are original and in my own words. (None are copied from a source.) Make sure to list all sources at the end of your guide.

Hurdlik

CLSK121

Sample Study Guide:

**If-clauses**

If-clauses are also called **conditional sentences**. These sentences have 2 parts:

* The **if-clause states** a real or hypothetical condition
  + If I come to class today… (a real condition)
  + If I owned an elephant… (hypothetical or unreal)
* The **result clause** (independent clause) tells what *will*, *would*, or *could* happen.
  + If I come to class tomorrow, I will learn about the French Revolution.
  + If I owned an elephant, I would need a much bigger backyard.

The rules about verb forms in conditional sentences are rather strict.

IF-CLAUSES about the PRESENT AND FUTURE

* **Real** (also called “true”) **conditionals about the present or future** generally use these forms:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| If clause | Result clause |
| **simple present**  (If John calls me…) | **future** (for future results)  If I come home late, my father will be angry.  **simple present** (for habits or general facts)  If I miss the bus after school, I always walk home.  **should, might, can (but not “would”)** or **an imperative**  If you fail the test, you should talk to your instructor.  If you need a ride tomorrow, call me.  If the temperature drops below 32°, the children can’t go outside. |

* **Hypothetical** (also called “unreal” or “untrue”) **conditionals about the present or future**  generally use these forms:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| If clause | Result clause |
| **simple past**  If Mary owned a dog…  (In fact, she *doesn’t*)  If Rob were\* a doctor…  (In fact, he’s *not*.) | **would (**or **could)+ base form of verb**    If Mary owned a dog, she would get much more exercise than  she does now.  If Rob were a doctor, he would probably work with children.  If you came over tomorrow, I could help you with your  homework. |

\*If the verb is BE, use “were” for all subjects.

IF-CLAUSES about the PAST

Sometimes we want to imagine what would or could have happened if things had been different in the past. Because we cannot change what happened in the past, these sentences are *always* hypothetical.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| If clause | Result clause |
| **Past perfect**  If I had gone to the party…  (The truth is, I *didn’t* go.)  If John hadn’t broken his leg…  (In fact, he *did* break it.) | **Would (**or **could) + have + past participle (for past events)**    If I had gone to the party, I would have danced with Mark.  If John hadn’t broken his leg, he would have gone skiing  with us this weekend. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| It is sometimes possible for the if-clause to refer to a **past situation** and the result clause to refer to a **present or future** situation. This is called a **mixed conditional**. | |
| If clause | Result clause |
| **Past perfect**  If I had been born in Paris  (In fact, I was born in Chicago)  If the rain hadn’t destroyed  my book yesterday… | If I had been born in Paris, I would be a French citizen. (now)  If the rain hadn’t destroyed my book yesterday, I could be  reading it right now. |

NOTES:

* You will sometimes hear Americans breaking these rules when speaking (see examples below). This is generally not acceptable in written English.
  + \*If I was rich, I would quit my job.
  + \*If you would’ve (pronounced, “woulda” or “would of”) called me, I would’ve picked you up.

Sources: Azar, Betty. *Understanding and Using English Grammar*.