



Explanations

Conditions and results

- Sentences with *If* are called conditionals. The *If ...* clause is the condition and the other part of the sentence is the result. Here are four examples of conditionals, used for talking about checking in at the airport for a flight:
 - 1 *If you **arrive** early, you **get** a better seat.*
 - 2 *If you **arrive** early, you'**ll** get a better seat.*
 - 3 *If you **arrived** early, you'**d** get a better seat.*
 - 4 *If you **had arrived** early, you'**d** have got a better seat.*
- Sentence 1 is talking generally about something that is always true. It is sometimes called a zero conditional.
Sentence 2 is talking about something that is likely to happen in the future. It is sometimes called the first conditional.
Sentence 3 is talking about something that is unlikely to happen in the future, or an imaginary situation. It is sometimes called the second conditional.
Sentence 4 is talking about something that is imaginary in the past. It is sometimes called the third conditional.

Zero conditional:
If + present
simple, ... present
simple

- Zero, first and second conditionals are covered in this unit. The third conditional is covered in Grammar 14.
- This type of sentence describes things that are always or generally true. We can use *when* or *if* to introduce the sentence.

*It's a tropical country, and so **if it rains** hard, everyone **stays** indoors.*

When it rains hard, everyone **stays** indoors.
- There can be an imperative structure in the result clause: just the bare infinitive with no subject. An imperative is when we tell people what to do.

***If you feel dizzy, stop** taking the tablets.*

***If you change** your mind, **give** me a ring.*

First conditional: *If*
+ present simple,
... *will/won't*

- This type of sentence describes future events that will happen, or are likely to happen. It is a real possibility in the speaker's mind, not imaginary (for imaginary situations see the second conditional).

***If we walk** so slowly, we'**ll** be late.*

***If we run**, we **won't** be late.*

***If we don't run**, we **will** be late.*

- Example: You are at the supermarket with a friend. Your friend has put some eggs in a bag, and is picking up lots of other bags at the same time. You say:

*If you **carry** too many bags, you'll **drop** the eggs.*

*If you **drop** the eggs, they'll **break**.*

*If the eggs **break**, there **will be** an awful mess on the floor!*

*If you **are** careful, you **won't break** them.*

- In the condition clause it is possible to use other present tenses, not just the present simple.

*If you're **driving**, I'll come with you.* (present continuous)

*If I've **seen** the film before, I'll let you know!* (present perfect)

Second
conditional: *If* +
past simple, ...
would/wouldn't

- This type of sentence describes future events that are imaginary, unlikely or impossible.

*If I **had** a helicopter, I'd fly to school.*

*If I **flew** to school, I **wouldn't be** late.*

- Example: You start talking to a friend about aliens. You say:

*If **some aliens** landed on earth, I'd **make friends** with them.*

*If they **didn't speak** English, I'd **use** sign language.*

*If they **took me** back to their planet, I'd **learn** their language.*

*If **anyone** believed my story, I'd **become** famous!*

- Note that *would* is usually contracted in speech.

I'd become famous. (= *I **would** become famous.*)

- Note that the past simple is used in the condition clause, but the time reference is the future.

- The regular past simple of *to be* is *I was* and *He/She was*. We can use these forms in second conditionals, or alternatively we can use *If I were* and *If he/she were*. The *were* form is more formal.

*If I **was/were** an astronaut, I'd enjoy being weightless!*

unless

Unless means *If not*. Compare these sentences which have the same meaning.

*We'll go out for a walk **if it doesn't rain**.*

*We'll go out for a walk **unless it rains**.*

Other uses of
would

We use *would* in other situations which do not involve conditional sentences.

Reporting what someone said:

*He said he **would call** back later.*

Polite offer:

***Would you like** some more tea?*

Polite request:

***Would you open** the window, please?*

Someone refused to do something:

*The minister **wouldn't answer** the question.*

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 14: Conditionals 2

Practice

1 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) If we'd be/we're late for class, our teacher will be/was angry.
- b) If we would live/lived on another planet, we'll see/we'd see the Earth in the sky.
- c) If we take/will take a taxi, we arrived/we'll arrive sooner.
- d) If we won't hurry/don't hurry, we'll be/we'd be late.
- e) If we were/are birds, we would be able to/are able to fly.
- f) If you don't wear/wouldn't wear your pullover, you'll feel/you felt cold.
- g) If I studied/will study harder, I get/would get better marks.
- h) If I have/had a motorbike, I rode/I'd ride it to school.
- i) If you will lend/lend me your bike, I'll let/I let you borrow my skateboard.
- j) If I had/have lots of money, I gave/I'd give some to all my friends.

2 Complete the sentence for each situation using the verbs given.

- a) You're standing very close to the edge of a swimming-pool. You're wearing all your clothes, not a swimming costume. A friend says:
If you (fall in) ... fall in, your clothes (get) will get ... wet!
- b) You're sitting in the classroom on a hot day. You're day-dreaming about going to the beach. You think:
If today (be) a holiday, I (go) to the beach.
- c) You can't answer a question in your English book. You ask a friend to help, but she doesn't know the answer. She says:
If I (know) the answer, I (tell) you.
- d) You're walking towards the bus stop with a friend. Suddenly the bus arrives. The bus stop is far away, but you think there is a chance of catching the bus. You say:
If we (run), we (catch) it!
- e) You're planning to go to the beach tomorrow with some friends. You are not sure about the weather, because it sometimes rains at this time of the year. You arrange to meet tomorrow afternoon and say:
If it (rain), we (go) to the cinema instead.
- f) You're very busy, because you have lots of school work, and you also play in two teams. A friend asks you to join a computer club. You say:
If I (have) more free time, I (join) the club.
But it's impossible at the moment because I'm too busy!

3 Complete each sentence using *if, unless* or *would*.

- a) If he asked me to help him, I *would*
- b) We'll have lunch outside in the garden, it's too cold.
- c) John win more races if he trained harder.
- d) Come on! we hurry, we'll miss the plane!
- e) you like to see my stamp collection?
- f) The manager won't be long. you take a seat, please.
- g) I'm sure that Connie go to the cinema with you, if you asked her.
- h) you feel like a chat, phone me tonight.
- i) What you do if you saw a snake?
- j) I don't feel happy I swim every day.

4 Complete each sentence (a-j) with an ending (1-10).

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| a) If you play the music too loud, ⁸ | 1 the alarm would go off. |
| b) If the North Pole melted, | 2 I'll buy a new bike. |
| c) If we don't have enough ice-cream, | 3 I'll be in Paris at 6.00. |
| d) If I found someone's wallet, | 4 you wouldn't see me any more! |
| e) If a burglar broke into this house, | 5 you would feel better. |
| f) If my train isn't late, | 6 the water would flood many cities. |
| g) If you were famous, | 7 I'll buy it for you. |
| h) If my father lends me the money, | 8 you'll wake up the neighbours. |
| i) If you took more exercise, | 9 we'll get some more. |
| j) If you tell me what you want, | 10 I'd take it to the police station. |

5 Complete each sentence as either a first conditional or a second conditional sentence using the verb in brackets.

- a) If I (have) *had*..... arms five metres long, I (be able) *'d be able*..... to reach the top of that shelf!
- b) Don't worry, you've just got a cold. If you (take) an aspirin, you (feel) better.
- c) Vegetarians believe that if nobody (eat) meat, everyone (live) longer.
- d) If I (become) a famous rock star, I (buy) my parents an enormous house.
- e) It says 'No Parking'. If you (leave) the car here, the police (give) you a parking fine.
- f) It's not far. If you (follow) this path, you (come) to the station.
- g) If people (use) bikes instead of cars, there (not be) so much pollution.
- h) Actually, Brutus is a very friendly dog. If you (touch) him, he (not bite) you.
- i) If you (leave) your books on the desk, I (give) them back to you at the end of the lesson.
- j) If you (own) a pet tiger, your friends (not visit) you!



Explanations

Third conditional:
If + past perfect, ...
would/wouldn't +
have + past
participle

- This type of sentence describes a past event that is different to what really happened.

*If you **had arrived** earlier, we **wouldn't have missed** the train.*

*If you **hadn't warned** me about the sun, I **would have got** sunburnt.*

- Example: You went for a long walk, but you did not take your umbrella. It rained, and you got wet.

*If I **had taken** my umbrella, I **wouldn't have got** wet.*

*If I'd **heard** the weather forecast, I **wouldn't have gone** out.*

*If I **hadn't gone** out, I **would have finished** my homework.*

Modal verbs in
conditional
sentences

- The examples in Grammar 13 and this unit have all used *will/won't* or *would/wouldn't* in the result clause. But we can use any other modal verb, like *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *must* and *should*.

*If you ever **come** to Istanbul, I **can** show you around the city.*

*If you ever **come** to Istanbul, you **must** phone me.*

- We often use *might* and *could* in conditional sentences when we want to say that we are not certain about the results. Compare:

*If you **carry** too many bags, you **will drop** the eggs.* (certain result)

*If you **carry** too many bags, you **might drop** the eggs.* (uncertain result)

*If anyone **believed** my story, I **would become** famous!* (certain result)

*If anyone **believed** my story, I **could become** famous!* (uncertain result)

In third conditional sentences we use *could have (done)* or *might have (done)*.

*If I **had brought** some more money with me, I **could have taken** a taxi.*

Conditionals
without *if*

In everyday speech we can use *imagine* or *supposing* in place of *if*.

***Imagine you saw** a snake, what would you do?*

***Supposing you owned** a helicopter, what would you use it for?*

If I were you, ...

We can give advice by using a second conditional sentence beginning *If I were you*.

***If I were you**, I'd spend more time on your written work.*

***If I were you**, I wouldn't eat so much chocolate!*

It is also possible to put the *if*-clause at the end.

*I'd be more careful, **if I were you**.*

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 13: Conditionals 1

Grammar 18: Modals 1

Grammar 19: Modals 2

Practice

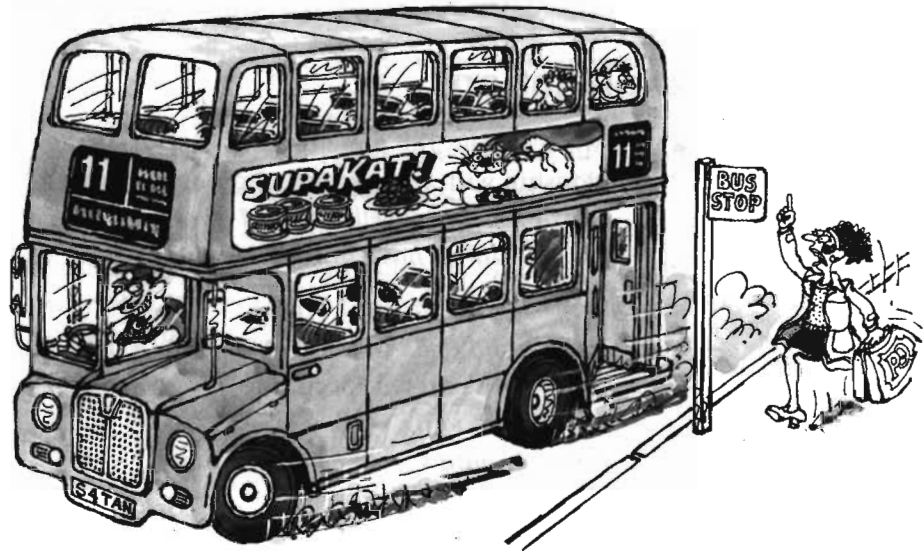
1 Rewrite each comment, beginning as shown. Do not change the meaning.

- a) Supposing you had wings, what would you do?
What *would you do if you had wings* ?
- b) Why don't you leave now? That's what I'd do.
If
- c) Imagine you lived on Mars. How would you feel?
How
- d) I think you should buy a bike. That's what I'd do.
If
- e) Imagine you were rich. What would you do?
What
- f) Supposing Jim came with us, what would you say?
What
- g) Why don't you take the bus. That's what I'd do.
If
- h) Imagine you owned a robot. What would you do?
What

2 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) If you *phoned/had phoned* me yesterday, I *had given/would have given* you the news.
- b) If you *took/would have taken* more exercise, you *might feel/had felt* better.
- c) If Tim *drove/had driven* more carefully, he *wouldn't have crashed/didn't crash*.
- d) If you *had come/came* to see the film, you *had enjoyed/would have enjoyed* it.
- e) If *I'd known/I would know* it was your birthday, I *would send/would have sent* you a card.
- f) If people *had helped/helped* one another more often, the world *might be/was* a better place.
- g) If our team *had scored/scored* more goals, we *had won/could have won*.
- h) If you *would have worn/wore* a coat, you *wouldn't get/didn't get* wet.

3 Complete the sentence for each situation.



- a) Charlotte didn't leave early, and so she missed the bus.
 If Charlotte *had left early*, she
wouldn't have missed the bus.
- b) I didn't buy more milk, so I didn't have enough for breakfast.
 If I, I
 enough for breakfast.
- c) We forgot to take a map, so we got lost in the mountains.
 If we, we
 in the mountains.
- d) I didn't go to bed early, so I didn't wake up at 7.00.
 If I early, I
 at 7.00.
- e) Mike didn't make a shopping list, and he forgot to buy some coffee.
 If Mike, he
 some coffee.
- f) I didn't realize you were tired when I asked you to go for a walk.
 If I, I
 for a walk.
- g) The Romans didn't sail across the Atlantic, so they didn't reach America.
 If the Romans, they
 America.
- h) I didn't turn left at the station, and I lost my way.
 If I, I
 my way.

Explanations

Wishes about the present

- For wishes about the present we use *I wish* + the past simple. Note the relationship with the second conditional.
I wish I owned a helicopter. If I owned a helicopter, I would be happy.
I wish I didn't have to go to school! If I didn't go to school, I would be happy.

- *could*

We use *I wish I could* to refer to something that is difficult or impossible. This can refer to the present or future.

I wish I could fly!

I wish I could stay at home tomorrow.

- As in the second conditional, the past simple form does not refer to past time.

Wishes about the past

For wishes about the past we use *I wish* + the past perfect. Note the relationship with the third conditional.

I wish I had lived in the eighteenth century! If I had lived in the eighteenth century, I would have been happy.

I wish I hadn't eaten so much! I feel awful! If I hadn't eaten so much, it would have been better for me!

hope

If the wish is a good one, we use *I hope*. This is not followed by a conditional form – it is simply followed by the present simple or *will*.

I hope you have a good time at the party.

I hope the weather will be fine tomorrow.

If only

We can replace *I wish* with *If only* for emphasis. We stress *only* in speech.

If only I owned a helicopter.

If only I hadn't eaten so much!

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 13: Conditionals 1
Grammar 14: Conditionals 2

Practice

1 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) I'm sunburnt. I wish I hadn't sunbathed/~~didn't sunbathe~~ for so long.
- b) I don't feel well. I wish I could stay/~~stayed~~ at home tomorrow.
- c) I'm not a good swimmer, but I wish I could swim/~~would swim~~ well.
- d) I wish I had/~~have~~ a puppy or a kitten!
- e) I wish I could see/~~saw~~ you tomorrow, but it's impossible.
- f) I wish Jim didn't sit/~~doesn't sit~~ next to me. He's so annoying!
- g) If only we had/~~would have~~ some money we could take the bus.
- h) I hope you enjoyed/~~enjoy~~ yourselves at the dance tomorrow.
- i) I wish I can/~~could~~ speak English better!
- j) I hope I'll/~~I'd~~ win the lottery!

2 Underline the correct continuation for each sentence.

- a) I've got lots of work to do, and I'm tired, but I can't stop.
1 I wish I had taken a rest. 2 I wish I could take a rest.
- b) I wasn't paying attention in class, and now I can't do my homework.
1 I wish I listened to my teacher. 2 I wish I'd listened to my teacher.
- c) Sarah painted her room green, but she doesn't like it.
1 She wishes she'd painted it blue. 2 She wishes she painted it blue.
- d) This is a very puzzling problem!
1 I wish I'd known the answer. 2 I wish I knew the answer.
- e) It's really cold and miserable here in the winter.
1 I wish we lived in a warm place. 2 I hope we live in a warm place.
- f) I can't repair my bike because I haven't got any tools.
1 If only I would have a screwdriver. 2 If only I had a screwdriver.
- g) I'm worried about my basketball team. Perhaps they won't win!
1 I wish they play well. 2 I hope they play well.
- h) You promised not to tell anyone my secrets but you did!
1 I wish I hadn't told you. 2 I wish I didn't tell you.
- i) I've been feeling ill all week.
1 I hope I feel better soon. 2 I hope I'd feel better soon.
- j) I want to see my sister. I haven't seen her for ages.
1 I wish I could speak to her. 2 I wish I spoke to her.

3 Complete each sentence with a suitable form of the verb in brackets.

- a) I'm soaked to the skin! If only I (bring) *had brought* an umbrella!
- b) This pullover was cheap. I wish I (buy) two of them!
- c) I like your school. I wish I (go) there too.
- d) I must get in touch with Sue. If only I (know) her phone number!
- e) This bus is really slow! I wish we (take) the train.
- f) I'm disappointed in this camera. I wish I (not buy) it.
- g) I answered three questions well. If only I (finish) the whole test!
- h) I can't understand Marie! I wish I (speak) French.

4 Complete each sentence in a suitable way.

- a) I'm hungry. If only *I had a sandwich* with me.
- b) Enjoy your holiday. I hope time.
- c) This is a lovely place. I wish we before.
- d) It's a pity you live so far away. If only you nearer.
- e) Ellen is a fantastic dancer. I wish I as well as her!

5 Rita isn't very happy at the moment. Complete her words.

- a) Rita wasted a lot of money on DVDs.
'I wish I *hadn't wasted* so much money on expensive DVDs!'
- b) Rita thinks new jobs are difficult to find.
'I wish new jobs so difficult to find.'
- c) Rita thinks new jobs are difficult to find.
'I wish new jobs easier to find.'
- d) Rita can't go on holiday this summer.
'I wish I on holiday.'
- e) Rita doesn't have very good qualifications.
'I wish I better qualifications.'
- f) Rita has to do the washing up. She hates doing it.
'I wish I do the washing up.'
- g) Rita is sorry her family moved to the suburbs.
'I wish we to the suburbs.'
- h) Rita thinks she is very untidy.
'I wish I so untidy.'