

ZERO AND FIRST CONDITIONALS

Zero and first conditional sentences both have an *if*-clause and a result clause. The *if*-clause can go first or second.

We use the zero conditional to talk about situations that regularly or naturally happen and to explain rules. The *if*-clause and the result clause both have present tense verbs. We can use *when* instead of *if* with no difference in meaning.

When / If you exercise, your heart rate goes up. (happens naturally)

I feel better if / when I walk to college. (happens regularly)

If / When you join the club, you have to pay a fee. (rule)

We use the first conditional to talk about possible future situations. The *if*-clause that describes the situation has a present tense verb. The result clause has a verb in a future form.

If we join a gym, we'll get fit. (= We might join a gym in the future. As a result, we'll get fit.)

If she studies too late at night, she's going to get tired. (= It's possible that she will study late at night. Then she'll feel tired.)

If I don't get into university, I might go to art college. (= It's possible that I won't get into university. Then I'll consider going to art college.)

We can use the conditional to give advice or instructions. You can use an imperative or a modal verb in the result clause.

If the baby cries, play some music. (imperative)

If you want to save money, you shouldn't go out so much. (modal)

If you need more help, you could ask your teacher. (modal)

We can use *unless* to mean 'if ... not' or 'except if' in conditional sentences.

You won't pass the exam unless you study harder. (= If you don't study harder, you won't pass the exam.)

Match the *if*-clauses (1–8) to the result clauses (a–h).

➔ If the library is too crowded, ————— she should go to a café.

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| 1 If Zak phones, | a they won't let you in. |
| 2 If she finds a job in London, | b tell him to meet me at the cinema. |
| 3 I can't reach the top shelf | c she'll move there. |
| 4 If you don't have your identity card, | d if I tell her to do her homework. |
| 5 They'll ask him to leave | e if I get lost. |
| 6 She ignores me | f I might stay the night here. |
| 7 If the weather's bad, | g unless I stand on a chair. |
| 8 Don't worry, I'll ask for directions | h if he doesn't arrive on time. |
| 9 I'll go to university | i you should see a doctor. |
| 10 If you don't feel better tomorrow, | j if I pass all my exams. |