

GRAMMAR

6.1

real conditionals

When we talk about situations which are always true, or events which are possible or probable in the future, using *if/when*, we can call these 'real conditionals'. They are also often referred to as zero (0) conditionals (always true) and first (1) conditionals (possible or probable in the future).

real conditional (zero)

<i>if/when</i> +	present simple +	present simple
If/When	You* heat water to 100° Centigrade,	it boils.

* Here you is a general subject meaning 'anyone' or 'people in general'.

Use the real conditional (zero) to talk about a general situation, or something which is always true (a fact):

If plants don't have water, they die. *Ice melts if you heat it.*
(You here refers to 'anyone', or people generally, not 'you' specifically.)

If/When can come at the beginning or in the middle of the sentence:

If I'm not in the office by 8a.m., my boss gets angry.

My boss gets angry if I'm not in the office by 8a.m.

If and *when* have the same meaning in zero conditional sentences.

In this case *if* means 'when this happens' or 'every time this happens':

When I'm feeling stressed, I eat chocolate.

If I'm feeling stressed, I eat chocolate.

real conditional (first)

<i>if/when</i> +	present simple +	<i>will/could/might + verb</i>
If	you give me your phone number,	I'll call you when we're ready.
When	you go into the kitchen,	you'll see the keys on the table.

Use the real conditional (first) to talk about possible situations in the future and their consequences. If you are sure about the result, use *will/won't*. If you're not sure, use *could/might*. We can change the order of the sentence, but *when* is always followed by the present simple:

If my train arrives on time, I'll meet you at ten o'clock. OR *I'll meet you at ten o'clock if my train arrives on time.* NOT *if my train will arrive on time.*

In first conditional sentences, *if* and *when* have different meanings. Use *if* when you are not sure if the situation will happen:

If I pass my exams, I'll be very happy.

Use *when* for a situation which you know will happen: *When I pass my exams, I'll have a party.*

Unless has the meaning of 'if not' or 'except in this situation':

I'll go straight to the restaurant, unless you call me first. (I will go straight to the restaurant, unless you don't call me first.)

Note the difference between zero and first conditional in the sentences below:

If you sit in the sun, you get sunburn.

(Zero conditional for a general situation/fact. 'You' means anyone, or people in general.)

If you sit in the sun, you'll get sunburn.

(First conditional for a specific situation.

I'm talking to you (personally) about what will happen today.)

6.2

hypothetical conditional: present/future

<i>if</i> +	past simple +	<i>would</i> clause
If	I worked longer hours, he was the President, we bought the house,	I would make more money. he'd make a lot of changes. we'd need to sell our car.

Use the hypothetical conditional to talk about an unreal or imaginary situation and its consequences. In conditional sentences, the past tense is used to indicate that something is hypothetical or imaginary.

In spoken English, *would* is contracted in the positive and negative form:

I'd be there if I had time. *If she had enough food, she'd feed us all.*

Would is not usually contracted in the question form:

If you passed your exam, would you go to university?

Would you help me if I paid you?

Use *If I were you ...* to give advice:

If I were you, I'd change teams.

Instead of *would*, we can use *could* or *should*:

If you got really fit, you could probably play again.

It is common to use other expressions in the *would* clause: *would be able to*, *would need to* and *would have to*

If I lost my job, I'd need to find another one!

We would have to cancel the game if it rained.

If you bought a larger quantity, we'd be able to offer you a better deal.

6.3

giving news

good news	I've got some good news (for you). I'm really pleased to tell you ... You'll never guess what.
bad news	Bad news, I'm afraid. I'm sorry to have to tell you, but ... I'm afraid/Unfortunately, ... I'm afraid I've got some bad news ... There's something I've got to tell you.
good or bad news	You know ...? Well, ... I've/We've got something to tell you.
responding to good news	Wow! That's fantastic/great news. Congratulations! You're joking! You lucky thing! Well done. Have you?/Did you?
responding to bad news	That's a shame. That's terrible/awful. That's really annoying. I'm really sorry to hear that.

PRACTICE

6.1

A Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

- If I pass my exams, my teacher be very surprised.
- When we visit my mother, she usually look after the children.
- When Gaby leave her job in the summer, she worry about what to do next.
- If I not find any cheap tickets, we not go to Malta.
- If you not water plants, they die.
- I be surprised if Martha come to the party. She said she wasn't feeling well.
- If you get lost, do you usually ask someone for directions?
- They not come unless you invite them.

6.2

A Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets. Use contractions where possible.

- If I sell my house now, it not/be worth very much.
- your parents/come if I organise a party?
- He not/be able to study here if not/pass that exam.
- If you lose your passport, need visit the consulate.
- They be healthier if not/eat so much junk food.
- If you write a novel, what call it?
- If the students not/have internet access, find it difficult.
- We not/work there if the boss not/give us a lot of freedom.
- Where she/live if have to move to a different country?
- If he can study on Tuesdays, not/need to come on Wednesday.

6.3

A Complete the conversations.

- A: You'll never guess what.
B: What?
A: I'm moving to Australia.
B: You're j!
A: No, I'm leaving in March.
B: You l thing.
- A: I've passed my exams!
B: H you? Congratulations!
A: Yes, I got the results this morning.

B Underline the correct alternative.

- You can't come to the conference unless/if/when you're invited.
- I'm not talking to you unless/if/when you calm down first.
- They'll arrive as soon as dinner is/will be/won't be ready.
- They'll cancel the flight if/unless/when the weather is bad.
- If you eat all of that chocolate mousse, you 'll feel/feel/won't feel ill.
- We'll organise a taxi when we know/will know/might know what time the concert starts.
- When I see a spider, I always scream/might scream/will scream.
- I'll get some money as soon as the bank will open/opens/might open.

B Write answers to the questions using the prompts. Use contractions.

- A: Can we walk to the game?
B: No. (be/late)
If we walked to the game, we'd be late.
- A: Why doesn't the team enter the competition?
B: (it/lose)
If the team loses.
- A: Can I borrow his car?
B: No. (get/angry)
If you get angry.
- A: Why don't we call her now?
B: No. (we/wake her up)
If we wake her up.
- A: Why can't we start the project again?
B: (waste/money)
If we waste money.
- A: Can we extend our holiday?
B: No. (miss/school)
If we miss school.