

CONDITIONAL CLAUSES

Introduction.

- a. *If you heat ice, it melts.*
- b. *If you make a promise, I keep it.*

These sentences are statements of universal truth or general validity, and in this type of sentence, "IF" corresponds closely in meaning to when(ever). Statements in this form commonly appear in factual discussions or explanatory material. The tenses in both the conditional and the main clause are the same.

Type 1. Basic forms.

- a. *If we catch the 10 o'clock train, we shall (can, may, etc.) get there by lunch time.*
- b. *If you wake up before me, give me a call.*

In these sentences the conditional clauses represent OPEN conditions; that is, conditions that may or may not be fulfilled. We make such statements when the action or event mentioned in the conditional clause is being actively considered, or is under discussion, or appears likely to happen. Such statements can even be comments on decisions already taken.

Conditions of this sort are sometimes labelled "probable", but it is important to note that the probability of the condition being fulfilled often exists only in the mind of the speaker.

The commonest sequence of tenses in this type of sentence is:

(if)present tense, (main)future or modal verb or imperative.

Note that "will" and "shall" are not used in a predicative sense in the conditional clause, even though it is the future that is referred to.

Type 1. Variations.

- a. *If we should miss the 10 o'clock train, we shan't get there till after lunch.*

The introduction of *should* (sometimes stressed) in the conditional clause has the effect of making it seem less likely that the condition will be fulfilled. It is possible to substitute "by any chance" for "should", without changing the meaning:

If by any chance we miss the 10 o'clock train, we shan't get there until after lunch.

We call this a condition of remote possibility, and this variation may be applied to any conditional clause of this first type. Note that only **SHOULD** (never **WOULD**) is used in this way.

b. *If you will reserve seats, we shall be sure of a comfortable journey.*

We saw earlier that *will* is not used in a predicative sense in the conditional clause in conditionals of type 1, even though the sentence has a future time reference. In the above sentence, **WILL** in the conditional clause is not an auxiliary indicating future; it is a modal verb, and introduces the idea of your agreeing, or being willing, to do what is suggested. We cannot use this construction in the following sentence:

If he gets my letter in time, he'll be able to change his plans.

We cannot say *If he will get my letter in time*, since he can hardly exercise any willingness to get it. Students must, therefore, be careful to use **WILL** in this way only where the context will support the idea of co-operation, agreement, or willingness on the part of the subject.

Type 1. Alternative forms.

- a. *Set your alarm clock and you won't oversleep.*
- b. *Set your alarm clock, or (else) you'll oversleep.*

In these sentences the imperative construction is equivalent to an *if* clause. We can rewrite the sentences using *if*:

- a. *If you set your alarm clock, you won't oversleep.*
- b. *If you don't set your alarm clock, you'll oversleep.*

Type 1. Summary of forms.

1. (if) present tense, (main) future or imperative.

*If we catch the early train, we'll get there by lunch-time.
If you wake up before me, give me a call.*

2. (if) should+infinitive, (main) future or imperative.

*If we should miss the early train, we shan't get there till
after lunch (should=by any chance)
If anyone should call while I'm out, tell them I'll be back
at two.*

3. (if) will+infinitive, (main) future or imperative.

*If you'll cook the dinner, I'll do the washing up
afterwards.
If he will do the work quickly, give him the contract.
(will=be willing).*

4. Imperative, (main) and/or + future.

*Set your alarm clock, and you won't oversleep.
Set your alarm clock, or (else) you'll oversleep.*

	SUBORDINATE	MAIN
If	Present tense	Future
If	should + infinitive By any chance	Future or imperative
If	will + infinitive Be (Present) so kind as	Future or imperative

	Imperative	And/or + future
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Type 2. Basic forms.

- a. *If we caught the 10 o'clock train, we would (could, might, etc.) get there by lunch-time.*
- b. *If I came into a fortune, I would give up smoking.*
- c. *If I knew how it worked, I could tell you what to do.*

In these sentences the conditional clauses represent what is a possible, b hypothetical/imaginary, or c contrary to the present fact. The verb form in the conditional clause represents the attitude of the speaker towards the condition; it does not represent time, which is indicated by other elements in the context or situation.

Sentence a is analogous to type 1 (If we catch..., we shall get...), but is more suppositional. The speaker either regards catching that train as improbable, or he wishes to put forward in a more tentative or "polite" way the suggestion of catching it. It does not necessarily follow that the condition is in fact unlikely to be fulfilled.

Sentence b, on the other hand, is much more hypothetical: it is a form of day-dreaming in which we all indulge at times. Sentence c presents us with totally imaginary (or unreal) situation with reference to the time of speaking: it implies that I don't, in fact, know how it works, so I can't tell you what to do. Note that the past tense is used here to indicate present unreality. The three sentences are formally identical: they all have the same sequence of tenses:

(if) past tense, (main) conditional.

However, contextually they are rather different. They represent three points on a scale of decreasing probability, from a suppositional or tentative but possible, to b hypothetical but not impossible, to c contrary to present fact, and hence unreal. Note that the conditional tense is not used in the conditional clause.

As we saw in example "c", the idea of something contrary to present fact is conveyed by the use of the past tense in the conditional clause. We also use the past tense to refer to

present unreality after the verb "wish" (if only, also expresses the wish of the speaker), and after expressions like "I'd rather" and "It is time":

- a. *I wish (that) I were rich! (If only I were rich!)*
- b. *I'd rather you told me frankly what you think.*
- c. *It's time (It's about time, It's high time) we left.*

We never use the present tense or a future form after wish. We use either the past tense as illustrated above, or we can use would (not will) to indicate that people or events frustrate our desires.

Type 2. Variations.

- a. *If we were to miss the 10 o'clock train, we wouldn't get there till after lunch.*

The use of were to in the conditional clause sometimes has the effect of emphasizing the suppositional nature of the condition and, is in some ways analogous to the use of should in conditional clauses in TYPE 1: we can often substitute "by any chance" without changing the meaning:

If by any chance we missed the 10 o'clock train, we wouldn't get there till after lunch.

Were to is used for all persons, and this variation may be applied to any conditional clause of this second type.

- b. *If you would reserve seats, we would be sure of a comfortable journey.*

In this sentence. would is not a part of a conditional tense; it is a modal verb, and represents a more tentative (or polite) form of WILL as used in conditional clauses of type 1. It introduces the idea of your agreeing, or being willing, to do what is suggested. We cannot use this construction in the following sentence:

If he got my letters in time, he would be able to change his plans.

We cannot say *If he would get my letter in time, since "he" can hardly exercise any willingness or unwillingness to get it. Students must, therefore, be careful to use "would" in this way only where the context will support the idea of co-operation, agreement, or willingness on the part of the subject.

Type 2. Summary of forms.

1. (If) past tense, (main) conditional.

If we caught the early train, we'd get there by lunch time.

2. (If) were to + infinitive, (main) conditional.

If we were to miss the early train, we wouldn't get there till after lunch.

3. (If) would + infinitive, (main) conditional.

If you'd cook the dinner, I'd do the washing up afterwards.

	SUBORDINATE	MAIN
I f	Past tense	Conditio nal
I f	were to + infinitive by any chance	Conditio nal
I f	would + infinitive was/were so kind as	Conditio nal

Type 3. Basic forms and variations.

a. *If we had caught the 10 o'clock train, we would (could,*

might, etc.) have got there by lunch-time.

This sentence is completely hypothetical, and represents what is contrary to past fact. In this case, the past perfect tense is used to indicate past unreality -we didn't catch the 10 o'clock train, so we didn't get there by lunch time.

This is analogous to the use of the past tense to indicate present unreality in type 2c, and tense usage after the verb WISH follows the same pattern: we use the past perfect to refer to something wished-for in the past:

I wish you had told me before (but you didn't)

Variations on a sentence "a" are not very common, though sentences like the following are occasionally met with:

- b. *If you were to have asked me, I would have been only too willing to help.*

Inversion.

An inversion of subject and verb may be used instead of "if" in the conditional clause of some types of sentences:

1. *Should you need my help again, just give me a ring.*
2. *Were the Government to go back on this election pledge, there would be a revolt among back-benchers.*
3. *Had I known you were ill, I would have visited you.*

EXERCISES

1. Put the verbs in brackets in the correct form.

1. If you (lose) _____ some of your luggage, enquire at the lost property office.
2. If you (not meet) _____ by friends at the airport, you should proceed to the air terminal. (Passive)
3. If you (require) _____ to do so, it (show) _____ in your passport endorsement. (Both passive)
4. In lodgings, your landlady (be) _____ glad if

you help to keep your part of the house clean and tidy.

5. If there is a gas fire in your bedroom, (make)_____ sure the gas tap is turned off before you go to bed.
6. If you (wish) _____ to stay longer than the time allowed, you (can) _____ apply to do so by writing to the Under Secretary of State Home Office.
7. If you (know) _____ you will return late she (can) _____ give you a key.
8. You (may) _____ have to do most of your own housework if you (live) _____ in a flat.
9. If it (be)_____ necessary, (buy) _____ a hot water bottle to warm the sheets.

2. Fill the blanks with IF or UNLESS.

1. I won't speak English_____I go to England.
2. _____ you don't tell me the truth I'll never know it.
3. I'll never know it_____you tell me the truth.
4. _____you do not pay attention you will not learn English.
5. _____you pay attention you will not learn English.
6. Don't open the door_____ you know who is ringing the bell.
7. Don't open the door_____ you don't know who is ringing the bell.

3. Finish the sentences, taking care to use the correct tenses.

1. If he had taken my advice_____
2. If you ate less_____
3. We'll send for the doctor if_____
4. If she practised more_____
5. If there isn't enough wine in this bottle_____
6. If you had checked the petrol before we started_____
7. This clock wouldn't have run down if_____
8. Try on the blue one if_____
9. If these gates are locked_____
- 10.If we leave before breakfast_____
- 11.If the river rises any higher_____
- 12.Her life might have been saved if_____
- 13.If the volcano starts erupting_____

- 14.The grass would look better if_____
- 15.Unless it is a nice day_____
- 16.If you don't put enough stamps on a letter, the person who gets it_____
- 17.He would lend it to you if_____
- 18.Unless this hotel gets another cook_____
- 19.If the storm becomes worse_____
- 20.If your uncle sees you_____
- 21.If you tried to climb it without a guide_____
- 22.If you don't shake the camera so much, your photographs_____
- 23.I'd have brought my coat_____
- 24.If he cut his hair more often_____
- 25.He would have given her diamonds if_____
- 26.If you had asked his permission_____
- 27.If the fire had been noticed earlier_____
- 28.If you had any sense_____
- 29.You would have been angry if_____
- 30.If he had put the flowers into the water at once_____
- 31.I should have ordered more coal if_____
- 32.If you leave the gate open_____
- 33.You will have to go to the dentist if_____
- 34.He would have been drowned if_____
- 35.If I had a car_____
- 36.If the telephone rings while I'm in my bath_____

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Christmas approached with no news of my aunt, not even by the medium of a Christmas card. A card of course arrived from Koffiefontein, a rather unlikely card with an old church seen across an acre of snow, and a comic one from Major Charge which showed goldfish in a bowl being fed by Father Christmas; it was delivered by hand to save the stamp. The local store sent me a tear-off calendar with a different



treasure of British art for each month, the colours bright and shiny as though they had been washed in Omo, and on 23 December the postman brought a large envelope which when I opened it at breakfast shed a lot of silvery tinsel into my plate, so that I couldn't finish my marmalade. The tinsel came from an Eiffel Tower which Father Christmas was climbing with his sack over his shoulder. Under the printed Meilleurs Voeux was only one name, written in block capitals: "Wordsworth". He must have seen my aunt in Paris, for how else could he have obtained my address? At the bank I had always used the official Christmas cards to send to my best clients, with the bank's coat of arms stamped on the cover and inside a picture of the main office in Cheapside or a photograph of the board of directors. Now that I had retired there were few people to whom I posted cards: Miss Keene, of course, Major Charge perforce. I sent one also to my doctor, my dentist, to the vicar of St. John's and my former chief cashier who had become manager of a branch in Nottingham.

Travels with my aunt.

Graham Greene.

QUESTIONS.

1. How many people sent letters?
2. What did the first card show?
3. In your opinion, which was the best card?
4. Could he finish his marmalade? Why?
5. Who did the person telling the story send letters to?
6. In the text there is one result clause. Which one?
7. Vocabulary.

goldfish:

silvery:

tinsel:

envelope:

branch:

Slapped boy, 12 takes his dad to court

By BILL DANIELS

A TEACHER who slapped his naughty son stood in court

yesterday -
accused of
assault by the
12-year-old.

The boy
complained to
police when he
suffered a red
mark on his
head.

The lad -
who cannot be
named for legal
reasons- did
not see his 43-
year-old father
in the dock.

But later
at his home,
the tubby
youngster raced
out to demand
with a grin:
"Do you know
what happened
to my dad?
Please tell
us."

Within
seconds, his
mum ordered him
back inside.

Torment

Earlier
she had
snapped: "We
have nothing to
say. This is a
family
matter."

Crown
lawyers threw
out the case
after hearing
the youngster
would "bask in

QUESTIONS

the glory" of
seeing his
father go on
trial.

Instead
the
schoolmaster,
43, was bound
over for a year
for £50.

He had
accused his son
of tormenting
his younger
brother.

The
father's
solicitor
Daniel Lupton
told
magistrates:
"He was simply
administering
lawful and
reasonable
chastisement."

Last
night Mr Lupton
spoke of the
teacher's
horror when his
son went to the
police.

The
lawyer said:
"He was deeply
upset. The boy
had made his
own way to the
police station.
Neither of his
parents were
aware of what
he was doing."

Mr Lupton
added the
father was very
relieved at the

outcome but the
case should
never have gone
to court.

He said:
"It stood to
disrupt an
entire family.
It would have
run contrary to
every
principle."

The
father refused
to comment as
he left the
court in
Stafford.

He went
to fetch some
belongings
before
returning to
the council-run
special school
where he
teaches.

At his
school, a
member of staff
said: "This is
purely a
private family
matter."

Reunion

The dad
had moved out
of his home in
Uttoxeter,
Staffs, because
of the strain
of the court
case.

He now
hopes to
reunite the

family.

At an
earlier hearing
the boy had
offered to
withdraw his
complaint but
only if his
father gave him
a written
apology.

The case
was referred to
several doctors
and one warned
the youngster
"will bask in
the glory of
his
accusations".

The medic
also said it
would be an
"unmitigated
disaster" for
the family if
the father went
on trial.

The 1989
Children Act
has given
youngsters a
record number
of rights.

It means
they are more
likely to be
believed if
they make
accusations
against any
adults -
including their
parents.

DAILY MIRROR
4, SEPT. 1996.

1. Why did the boy accuse his father?
2. Where is the family from?
3. On what condition would the boy withdraw the accusation?
4. What does the father do?
5. Why was the boy slapped?
6. What does the mother think about all that?
7. Composition: Children rights, are they right? (80 words)
8. Vocabulary: Bask, Fetch, Complaint, Apology.

You thickheads

Scandal of new Carlsberg drink aimed at kids

A DRINKS giant has been forced to change the label on its alcoholic pop -because it's too tempting for kids.

But Carlsberg-Tetley has **REFUSED** to withdraw 500.000 bottles it has already distributed.

Fluorescent orange Thickhead tastes like tangerine sherbet with the gooey consistency of hair gel.

But with 4.9 per cent alcohol, the strength of a premium

beer, it can give a thumping hangover.

Last night the sickly drink sparked a storm of protest from campaigners who fear it will be snapped up by youngsters. At the same time, Labour called for an independent inquiry into the £250-million-a-year alco-pops market to make sure they are not aimed at teenagers.

Shadow consumer

affairs spokesman Nigel Griffiths called for 500.000 bottles to be taken off the shelves until the controversial label is changed.

He said: "The real test will be how quickly the labelling is changed.

"This product can't simply be left on the shelves and sold."

Code

Jean Coussins,
director of drinks

By TANITH CAREY

industry watchdog the Portman Group, said the label clearly contravened its voluntary code of practice.

She says: "As it stands, the label on the bottle may well appeal to the under-eighteens, which is why we drew up the code in the first place.

"The man on the bottle is pulling a childish face and he could just as easily be under 18 as over

But Jean Coussins said she was angry the drinks giant had gone ahead with the launch despite Portman's serious reservations.

She stressed: "We were only consulted about this on Friday night at the eleventh hour. For the company to say that they consulted us all along is being seriously economical with the truth."

Thickhead, hailed as "the Holy Grail of the drinks industry," is the

18.

"Our code states that the word alcoholic should be prominent and adjacent to the brand name.

"Yet on this label, the word alcoholic is small orange print. It can hardly be seen."

Thickhead's research and development manager Tom Wright last night confirmed that the company had agreed to change the label.

He said that the latest product to cash in on the alco-pop trend.

Now worth an estimated £250 million a year, alco-pops are the drink industry's fastest growing market.

The two biggest sellers are Hooper's Hooch and Two Dogs lemonade.

Taste

Carlsberg-Tetley already have 5 per cent of the market with their Orange and Lemonhead.

face on the bottle will be made to look older and less childish.

The word "alcoholic" will also get more prominence.

He added: "The drink is clearly packaged in a beer-type bottle.

"It is aimed at 18 to 30 years old who have developed a palate for fruit based drinks."

Pip Mason of Midlands-based alcohol agency Aquarius said:

"All the evidence is that young people are falling for these drinks.

"Unlike beer and spirits, you don't have to acquire a taste for them.

"They are strongly alcoholic, while tasting like pop."

DAILY MIRROR
Sept. 4, 1996

QUESTIONS

1. What is the main feature of these drinks?
2. How much is the firm worth?
3. What other alco-pops are mentioned in the text?
4. Why are alco-pops so popular among youngsters?
5. What's wrong with the label of Thickhead?
6. Has the firm the intention to change it?

7. What's the difference between alco-pops and beer or spirits?
8. Vocabulary: Trend, Label, Spark, Hangover.
9. What's your opinion about drink abuse (80 words)?

CRUZ DE NAVAJAS

A las cinco se cierra la barra
del 33
pero Mario no sale hasta las
seis
y si encima le toca hacer caja
despídete
casi siempre se le hace de día
mientras María ya se ha puesto
en pie,
ha hecho la casa
ha hecho hasta el café
y le espera medio desnuda,
Mario llega cansado y saluda
sin mucho afán
quiere cama pero otra variedad
y María se moja las ganas en
el café,
magdalenas de sexo convexo.
Luego al trabajo en un gran
almacén,
cuando regresa no hay más que
un somier
que es María con compañía.

Estribillo.

Sobre Mario de bruces tres
cruces.
Una en la frente la que más
dolió,
otra en el pecho la que le
mató
y otra miente en el noticiero:
dos drogadictos en plena

taciturno que usar por turnos.

Estribillo.

Cruz de navajas por una mujer,
brillos mortales despuntan al
alba,
sangres que tiñen de malva
el amanecer.

Pero hoy como ha habido redada
en el 33

Mario vuelve a las cinco menos
diez.

Por su calle vacía a lo lejos
sólo se ve

a unos novios comiéndose a
besos

y el pobre Mario se quiere
morir

cuando se acerca para
descubrir

ansiedad

roban y matan a Mario Postigo
mientras su esposa es testigo
desde el portal.

En vez de cruz de navajas por
una mujer

brillos mortales despuntan al
alba

sangres que tiñen de malva el
amanecer.

REVISION OF TENSES.

Supply suitable tenses.

1. I (always have) _____ trouble with my engine these days.
2. I wonder why I always (have) _____ trouble with the engine whenever I (decide) _____ to go home by car.
3. If I (be) _____ a ghost, I (try) _____ to frighten all the people I dislike.
4. In a few minutes' time, when the clock (strike) _____ six, I (wait) _____ here three-quarters of an hour.
5. He (know) _____ her a long time before he finally (get) _____ married to her.
6. I hope it (not rain) _____ when the bride (leave) _____ the church tomorrow.
7. I'm sorry you (get) _____ lost coming here. I (go) _____ to meet you at the station if I (know) _____ you (want) _____ me to.
8. I (tell) _____ a lie if I said that I (like) _____ you.
9. I'm worried about my approaching marriage. I (wish) _____ I (can) _____ get out of it, but I simply (can) _____ not.
10. These puppets (not be) _____ with us a week before Mr Punch (get lost) _____.
11. He (play) _____ the part now if he (not offend) _____ the producer at the last rehearsal.
12. You (go) _____ with us to the Zoo tomorrow if you (be) _____ a good boy.
13. They (intend) _____ to go there next week, but now they (find) _____ they (have not) _____ enough money.
14. I (work) _____ very hard lately.
15. What you (do) _____ just now while I (wash) _____ the dishes?
16. I (read) _____ in yesterday's paper that a

- boy (steal) _____ a watch and
 (sell)_____ it, and that the police (look)
 _____for him everywhere but not
 (find)_____ him.
17. When he grew old he often (think) _____ of
 all the things he (do) _____when he
 (be)_____ young.
18. When he grows old he often (think) _____ of
 all the things he (do) _____when he (be)
 _____young.
19. I never (read) _____a story that (interest)
 _____ me so much as the one I
 (read)_____ last night.
20. When we (go) _____ to see them last night,
 they (play) _____ cards; they (say)
 _____ they (play) _____since
 six o'clock.
21. By the end of last year he (read) _____ four
 Shakespeare plays, and by next year he (read)
 _____ two more. I (not see)
 _____ him since last Monday, but I (believe)
 _____ he (write)_____ an essay
 on Hamlet at present.