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CONDITIONAL SENTENCES



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Grammar Summary

A full **conditional sentence** (one which expresses the condition as well as its consequences) therefore contains two **clauses**: the dependent **clause** expressing the condition, called the protasis; and the main **clause** expressing the consequence, called the apodosis.



Grammar Summary

Conditional tenses are used to speculate about what ***could happen***, what ***might have happened***, and what ***we wish would happen***. In English, most sentences using the conditional contain the word *if*. are made up of an *if* clause and a main clause.



THE ZERO CONDITIONAL

The zero conditional is used for when the time being referred to is **now or always** and the situation is **real and possible**. The zero conditional is often used to refer to general truths. The tense in both parts of the sentence is the simple present. In zero conditional sentences, the word "if" can usually be replaced by the word "when" without changing the meaning.



Form:

If clause	Main clause
If + simple present	simple present
If this thing happens	that thing happens.
If you heat ice	it melts.
If it rains	the grass gets wet.



Form:

As in all conditional sentences, the order of the clauses is not fixed. You may have to rearrange the pronouns and adjust punctuation when you change the order of the clauses, but the meaning is identical. In zero conditional sentences, you can replace "if" with "when", because both express general truths. The meaning will be unchanged.



Function 1:

The zero conditional is used to make statements about the real world, and often refers to general truths, such as scientific facts. In these sentences, the time is **now or always** and the situation is **real and possible**.

- *If you freeze water, it becomes a solid.*
- *Plants die if they don't have enough water.*
- *If you mix red and blue you get purple.*



Function 2:

The zero conditional is also **often** used to give instructions, using the imperative in the main clause.

- *If Bill phones, tell him to meet me at the cinema.*
- *Ask Pete if you're not sure what to do.*
- *If you want to come, call me before 5:00*



TYPE 1 CONDITIONAL

The type 1 conditional is used to refer to the **present or future** where the **situation is real**. The type 1 conditional refers to a possible condition and its probable result. In these sentences the if clause is in the simple present, and the main clause is in the simple future.



Form:

If clause	Main clause
If + simple present	simple future
If this thing happens	that thing will happen.
If you don't hurry	you will miss the train.
If it rains today	you will get wet.



Form:

As in all conditional sentences, the order of the clauses is not fixed. You may have to rearrange the pronouns and adjust punctuation when you change the order of the clauses, but the meaning is identical.

- *If it rains, you will get wet.*
- *You will get wet if it rains.*



Function 1:

The type 1 conditional refers to a possible condition and its probable result. These sentences are based on facts, and they are used to make statements about the real world, and about particular situations.

- *If I have time, I'll finish that later.*
- *What will you do if you miss the plane?*
- *If you don't leave, I'll call the police.*



Function 2:

We often use such sentences to give warnings. In type 1 conditional sentences, the time is the **present or future** and the situation is **real**.

- *If you drop the glass, it will break.*
- *If you don't drop the gun, I'll shoot!*
- *If you don't leave, I'll call the police.*



Modals in Conditionals 1:

In type 1 conditional sentences, you can also use modals in the main clause instead of the future tense to express the degree of certainty, permission, or a recommendation about the outcome.

- *If you drop the glass, it might break.*
- *If he calls you, you should go.*
- *I may finish that later if I have time.*



Exceptions:

Condition refers to:	If Clause		Main Clause	
<i>future action</i>	Simple Present	If the book is interesting, ...	Future I	...I will buy it.
			Imperative	...buy it.
			Modal Auxiliary	...you can buy it.
<i>action going on now</i>	Present Progressive	If he is snoring, ...	Future I	...I will wake him up.
			Imperative	...wake him up.
			Modal Auxiliary	...you can wake him up.
<i>finished action</i>	Present Perfect	If he has moved into his new flat, ...	Future I	...we will visit him.
			Imperative	...visit him.
			Modal Auxiliary	...we can visit him.
<i>improbable action</i>	should + Infinitive	If she should win this race, ...	Future I	...I will congratulate her.
			Imperative	...congratulate her.
			Modal Auxiliary	...we can congratulate her.
<i>present facts</i>	Simple Present	If he gets what he wants, ...	Simple Present	...he is very nice.



TYPE 2 CONDITIONAL

The type 2 conditional is used to refer to a time that is **now or any time**, and a situation that is **unreal**. These sentences are not based on fact. The type 2 conditional is used to refer to a hypothetical condition and its probable result. In type 2 conditional sentences, the if clause uses the simple past, and the main clause uses the present conditional.



Form:

If clause	Main clause
If + simple past	present conditional or present continuous conditional
If this thing happened	that thing would happen. (but I'm not sure this thing will happen) OR that thing would be happening.
If you went to bed earlier	you would not be so tired.
If it rained	you would get wet.
If I spoke Italian	I would be working in Italy.



Function 1:

The type 2 conditional refers to an unlikely or hypothetical condition and its probable result. These sentences are not based on the actual situation. In type 2 conditional sentences, the time is **now or any time** and the situation is **hypothetical**.

- *If I was the Queen of England, I would give everyone a chicken. (But I am not the Queen.)*
- *If the weather wasn't so bad, we would go to the park. (But the weather is bad so we can't go.)*



Function 1:

It is correct, and very common, to say "if I were" instead of "if I was" (subjunctive mood).

- *If I were taller, I would buy this dress.*
- *If I were 20, I would travel the world.*
- *If I were a plant, I would love the rain.*



Modals in Conditionals 2:

In type 2 conditional sentences, you can also use modals in the main clause instead of "would" to express the degree of certainty, permission, or a recommendation about the outcome.

- *We might buy a larger house if we had more money*
- *He could go to the concert if you gave him your ticket.*
- *If he called me, I couldn't hear.*



PRESENT CONTINUOUS CONDITIONAL

In type 2 conditional sentences, the continuous form of the present conditional may be used.

This form is common in type 2 conditional sentences. It expresses an **unfinished or continuing action or situation**, which is the probable result of an **unreal condition**.



PRESENT CONTINUOUS CONDITIONAL

The present continuous conditional tense of any verb is composed of three elements: **would + be + present participle**

The present participle is formed by taking the base form of the verb and adding the -ing ending.

- *I would be working in Italy if I spoke Italian. (But I don't speak Italian, so I am not working in Italy)*
- *She wouldn't be living with Jack if she lived with her parents. (But she is living with Jack and not with her parents).*
- *You wouldn't be smiling if you knew the truth. (But you are smiling because you don't know the truth.)*



TYPE 3 CONDITIONAL

The type 3 conditional is used to refer to a time that is **in the past**, and a situation that is **contrary to reality**. The facts they are based on are the opposite of what is expressed. The type 3 conditional is used to refer to an unreal past condition and its probable past result.



Form:

If clause	Main clause
If + past perfect	perfect conditional or perfect continuous conditional
If this thing had happened	that thing would have happened. (but neither of those things really happened) OR that thing would have been happening.
If you had studied harder	you would have passed the exam.
If it had rained	you would have gotten wet.
If I had accepted that promotion	I would have been working in Milan.



Function 1:

The type 3 conditional refers to an impossible condition in the past and its probable result in the past.

These sentences are truly hypothetical and unreal, because it is now too late for the condition or its result to exist.

There is always some implication of regret with type 3 conditional sentences. In type 3 conditional sentences, the time is the **past** and the situation is **hypothetical**.

- *If I had worked harder I would have passed the exam. (But I didn't work hard, and I didn't pass the exam.)*
- *If I had known you were coming I would have baked a cake. (But I didn't know and I didn't bake a cake.)*
- *I would have been happy if you had called me on my birthday. (But you didn't call me and I am not happy.)*



Modals in Conditionals 3:

In type 3 conditional sentences, you can also use modals in the main clause instead of "would" to express the degree of certainty, permission, or a recommendation about the outcome.

- *If I had worked harder I might have passed the exam.*
- *You could have been on time if you had caught the bus.*



PERFECT CONTINUOUS CONDITIONAL

The perfect continuous conditional can be used in type 3 conditional sentences. It refers to the unfulfilled result of the action in the if-clause, and expresses this result as an unfinished or continuous action.

The perfect continuous conditional tense of any verb is composed of four elements:

would + have + been + present participle

The present participle is formed by taking the base form of the verb and adding the -ing ending.

- *If the weather had been better (but it wasn't), I'd have been sitting in the garden when he arrived (but I wasn't).*
- *If she hadn't got a job in London (but she did), she would have been working in Paris (but she wasn't).*
- *If I had had a ball I would have been playing football.*



TYPE 3 CONDITIONAL

The mixed type conditional is used to refer to a time that is **in the past**, and a situation that is **ongoing into the present**.

The facts they are based on are the opposite of what is expressed. The mixed type conditional is used to refer to an unreal past condition and its probable result in the present. In mixed type conditional sentences, the if clause uses the past perfect, and the main clause uses the present conditional.



Form:

If clause	Main clause
If + past perfect or simple past	present conditional or perfect conditional
If this thing had happened	that thing would happen. (but this thing didn't happen so that thing isn't happening)
If I had worked harder at school	I would have a better job now.
If we had looked at the map	we wouldn't be lost.
If you weren't afraid of spiders	you would have picked it up and put it outside.



Summary:

Using the verb **wish** plus a clause about the wish is a very common construction in English, *especially in spoken language*. The verb after wish is one tense before the actual time. In other words, if you want to wish for the present time, use past tense. If you want to wish for the past time, use past perfect tense. If you want to wish for the future time, use would.



Wish	Meaning
<p>I wish that I had today off. <i>wish</i> + subject + past tense form</p>	<p>I am working today.</p>
<p>I wish I were lying on a warm sunny beach right now. <i>wish</i> + subject + <i>be</i> + base form of verb + -ing</p>	<p>I am not lying on a beach.</p>
<p>He wishes she would let him have a week off. <i>wish</i> + subject + <i>would/could</i> + base form of verb</p>	<p>She will not let him have a week off.</p>
<p>They wish that they hadn't spent \$500. <i>wish</i> + subject + <i>had</i> + past participle</p>	<p>They spent \$500.</p>
<p>She wishes she could have stayed in Orlando one more day. <i>wish</i> + subject + <i>could/would</i> + have + past participle</p>	<p>She was not able to stay in Orlando an extra day.</p>



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