

Conditionals

Zero conditional (if/when/whenever + present tense, present tense)

General or scientific facts and definitions	<i>If you burn fossil fuels, carbon dioxide is produced.</i>
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First conditional (if + present tense, will + bare infinitive / imperative)

Real conditions in the present or future and their results in the present or future	<i>If we continue to pollute our planet, future generations will suffer.</i>
To give conditional instructions	<i>If the people from Greenpeace call, tell them I'll call them back later.</i>

Watch out!

Other modals and semi-modals can be used instead of *will* in the result clause in first conditionals. These include *be going to*, *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *shall*, *should*, *have to* and *ought to*.
 ✓ We **might** prevent disaster if we change the way we live now.

Second conditional (if + past simple / past continuous, would + bare infinitive)

Hypothetical conditions in the present or future and their hypothetical results in the present or future	<i>What would the local government do if there was an earthquake in the area?</i>
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Watch out!

Other modals can be used instead of *would* in the result clause in second conditionals. These include *might* and *could*.
 ✓ If the weather was better, we **could** have a picnic.

vs Grammar

- In British English, we can use both *was* and *were* after *if* with first and third person singular. *Were* is more common in a formal style. In American English, it is usual to use *were*.
 UK: *If I **was/were** a gambler, I'd put money on Jim being late.*
 US: *If I **were** a gambler, I'd put money on Jim being late.*
- In both British and American English, *were* is usually used in the phrase *If I were you, ...*

Third conditional (if + past perfect, would have + past participle)

Hypothetical conditions in the past and their results in the past	<i>A lot more people would have been trapped by the flood if there hadn't been a warning.</i>
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Watch out!

Other modals can be used instead of *would* in the result clause in third conditionals. These include *might*, *could* and *should*.
 ✓ If you **hadn't had** a lot of luck, you **could** have lost all your money.

Mixed conditionals

Hypothetical conditions in the past and their results in the present	<i>You might not be in so much trouble if you hadn't started gambling.</i>
Hypothetical conditions in the present and their results in the past	<i>If I were you, I would have made Paula buy her own lottery ticket.</i>

Inverted conditionals

More formal form of the first conditional (with <i>should</i>)	Should the drought continue, many people will be forced to leave their villages. (= If the drought should continue ... / If the drought continues ...)
More formal form of the second conditional	Were we to stop using fossil fuels tomorrow, it would still take decades for the planet to recover. (= If we were to stop ... / If we stopped ...)
More formal form of the third conditional	Had Charles Darwin not visited the Galapagos Islands, he might never have developed his theory of evolution. (= If Charles Darwin hadn't visited ...)

Watch out!

- When the verb to be inverted is negative, we put **not** after the subject.
✓ Had we **not** attended the meeting, we would have had no idea of the council's plans.
- When the *if* clause comes before the result clause, we usually separate the two clauses with a comma. When the result clause comes first, we do not use a comma.
✓ If you share a car to work, you can save on energy. ✓ You can save on energy if you share a car to work.

Other conditional structures

As/so long as	We'll go up to the mountains this weekend as long as the weather's okay.
Provided/Providing (that)	You can have a pet provided that you promise to look after it properly.
On condition (that)	Applications for membership are accepted on condition that applicants are over 18.
Suppose/Supposing	Supposing the price of oil tripled tomorrow. What do you think would happen?
If it wasn't/weren't for + noun	I think I'd be quite lonely if it wasn't/weren't for my dog, Buster.
Were it not for + noun	Were it not for my dog, Buster, I think I'd be quite lonely.
But for + noun	But for your help, I wouldn't have been able to quit gambling.
If it hadn't been for + noun	If it hadn't been for your help, I wouldn't have been able to quit gambling.
Had it not been for + noun	Had it not been for your help, I wouldn't have been able to quit gambling.
If ... (should) happen to	If you (should) happen to see Davina, ask her whether she would look after the cats this weekend.
If ... should	If you should see Davina, ask her whether she would look after the cats this weekend.
If ... happened to	If you happened to see someone drop litter in the street, what would you do?
If ... were to	Do you think it would reduce pollution if the government were to introduce a new tax on petrol?
If so/not	Are you concerned about the environment? If so , you might be interested in joining Greenpeace.
Otherwise	You should have your air conditioner serviced, otherwise you'll waste a lot of energy.
Unless	Unless governments act now, the environment is really going to suffer.
In case of + noun	In case of fire, leave the building by the nearest emergency exit.
In case	Take a coat with you in case the weather gets worse.

Other uses of if

To mean 'if it is true that'	If you were at the meeting, why didn't you raise the issue of recycling?
To mean 'if you are willing to'	If you'll follow me, I'll show you into the park manager's office.
To mean 'I'm saying this in case'	If you like zoos, the one in Singapore is fantastic.

A Match to make sentences.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1 If you stay with us for three days, | A we might get served a bit more quickly. |
| 2 If you decide not to vote in the election, | B give us a call and we'll come to pick you up. |
| 3 If you didn't eat your lunch so fast, | C very few people would obey the law. |
| 4 If there were a few more people working, | D you wouldn't get hiccups, would you? |
| 5 If you forget to take your passport, | E they have to go through a complicated procedure. |
| 6 If the hire car isn't there when you arrive, | F we'd be happy to give you a good reference. |
| 7 If the city continues to expand, | G I'm pretty sure they won't let you check in. |
| 8 If the police didn't fine people, | H more areas of natural beauty will be destroyed. |
| 9 If you did decide to leave the company, | I we'll have enough time to see a few sights. |
| 10 If MPs wish to resign, | J you can't really complain about the government. |

B Rewrite using an appropriate conditional form, starting with the words given.

- Sue didn't get me a birthday present, which is why I didn't get her one.
If Sue
- We didn't pay them on time because they made a mistake with our order.
If they
- The climate is undergoing such radical changes that scientists are worried.
If
- Did California become an important area because they found gold there?
Would?
- It's the sunset that attracts tourists to that place.
If it
- There was a traffic jam on the motorway so I was late for my interview.
If there
- I suggest you use a sunblock, and then you won't go red.
If I were
- The accident happened as a result of the driver's not paying attention to the road.
If the driver

C Complete using the correct form of the verbs in bold. Add any other words you need.

17th March

So, today marks one year since I became a Park Ranger. If I (1) (do) that then, I never (2) (have) so many fantastic experiences. If you (3) (ask) me now, I would say that I knew nothing when I started, but I've learnt a huge amount. In a typical day, I'll deal with complaints, check on the running of the park and lead guided tours, if any (4) (book). If it's low season, I (5) (have) time to check on forest management and fire control measures. It can get stressful at times, especially if visitors to the park (6) (get) lost or injured. We had a case last week, which wouldn't (7) (happen) if the woman involved (8) (be) a bit more careful. You see, if you (9) (wander) around a large National Park like this without a map, you're bound to get lost. This particular case might (10) (be) so bad if it (11) (start) raining. She was only wearing light clothes, so she was wet through and freezing when we found her. I dread to think what might (12) (happen) if we hadn't!

D Circle the correct word or phrase.

- 1 If we hadn't taken a wrong turning back there, we wouldn't **be / have been** in this mess now.
- 2 **Should / Would** you need any further assistance, please don't hesitate to ask.
- 3 **Had they not / Hadn't they** warned people in time, a lot more lives could have been lost.
- 4 If you **worked / had worked** last weekend when the boss asked you, then you wouldn't have to work this weekend.
- 5 Were all the members of staff to attend the conference, would the hotel **have / have had** enough rooms for everyone?
- 6 Had the government acted sooner, the general public wouldn't **be worrying / have worried** so much about the current situation.
- 7 Tom Cruise wouldn't be the star he is today **had he not / should he not have** made a good impression in his early films.
- 8 **Weren't we / Were we not** to build more roads, the traffic system would collapse by 2020.
- 9 It would be hard enough to pass the exam tomorrow even if you **went / had gone** to all the lectures this year.
- 10 You can contact the hotel manager on extension 142 **should / could** you need to.
- 11 **Shouldn't you / Should you not** receive confirmation of your flight by e-mail, please click the link below.
- 12 I would have asked the person for ID before I let him in, if I **were / have been** you.

E Complete using the words in the box.

case • condition • long • otherwise • provided • so • suppose • unless

- 1 Do you want a highly-paid career, and, if , are you prepared to retrain? Contact us.
- 2 I'm quite happy to lend you money, as as you make sure I get it back.
- 3 The village fair should be a great success, we don't have the same problems with the weather as last year.
- 4 It'd be great to see you on Saturday evening, you've already got other plans.
- 5 Could you go to the shop for me? I have to stay in the courier comes.
- 6 Your idea sounds fine in theory, but just something goes wrong. What then?
- 7 Write your name at the top of your essay, I won't know which one's yours.
- 8 The judge allowed the accused to stay at home on she reported to the police every morning.

F Write one word in each gap.

- 1 I would never be able to afford a new house if wasn't for all the overtime I've been doing.
- 2 If it hadn't for the fact that his uncle was a partner in the business, Angus would never have got the job.
- 3 How do you think you'd feel if someone happened damage your car like that?
- 4 for the kindness of a complete stranger, I would never have found the hotel.
- 5 I don't think I'd be surprised in the slightest Paul were to suddenly announce that he was moving abroad.
- 6 Don't forget to mention the new schedule to Veronica if you happen to see her this evening.
- 7 Football matches would be ideal family outings it not for the danger of violence.
- 8 If it hadn't been the children, I'm sure Trisha would have left Tom a long time ago.
- 9 I would have lost the game it not been for some quick thinking.
- 10 If you find the book I was asking you about, give me a call.

G Rewrite the sentences, starting with the words given.

- 1 The only reason we won the contract was Debbie's fantastic presentation.
We wouldn't have
- 2 The eventual arrival of the ferry prevented a fight from breaking out amongst the passengers.
If it hadn't been for
- 3 None of the passengers was injured because of the driver's quick reaction.
But
- 4 We'll have to cancel the meeting if Wendy doesn't turn up soon.
Unless
- 5 Mr Jones would be quite lonely if he didn't have his daughter's visits.
Were it
- 6 Here's my phone number, because you might need it.
In case
- 7 Agree to be back by midnight and you can go.
Providing
- 8 Officer Hughes prevented the robbers from escaping.
Had it

H Choose the correct answer.

- 1 If you saw another student cheating in an exam,
..... somebody?
A did you tell C would you tell
B do you tell D have you told
- 2 Make sure you mix the ingredients well,
..... you might get lumps in your cake.
A unless C provided
B otherwise D supposing
- 3 Were my dad, I would never have
started playing tennis in the first place.
A it for C it to be for
B it hadn't been for D it not for
- 4 If I hear from Nigel, I'll tell him you
were asking after him.
A happened C should to
B should happen to D will happen to
- 5 The book would have been perfect
the ending.
A had it not been for C it hadn't been for
B it had not been for D hadn't it been for
- 6 If you hadn't taken the money, you
in prison now.
A wouldn't have been C haven't been
B hadn't been D wouldn't be
- 7 Do you think that if we earlier we
might not have missed the coach?
A have been leaving C had left
B left D have left
- 8 Unless Ray here soon, I'm going to
leave because I'm getting bored.
A doesn't get C won't get
B gets D will get
- 9 What if I you that there's a good
chance I can get tickets for the concert?
A were to tell C have told
B were telling D would to tell
- 10 If there happen to be any reason
for late delivery, please inform our
Accounts Department.
A might C would
B could D should

Write one word in each gap.

CFCs

Had (1) not been for the invention of CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons) in the 1920s, at least one environmental problem might have been avoided. In fact, (2) they to be invented today, they (3) no doubt be immediately banned. For fifty years, though, if you bought an air conditioner or a spray, there (4) a good chance that it contained CFCs – and those CFCs are still around in the atmosphere.

If you (5) able to travel into the upper layers of the atmosphere, you (6) see the chlorine and fluorine from CFCs breaking down the ozone (a form of oxygen). Ozone could damage your lungs (7) you were to breathe it, but high in the atmosphere it performs the function of blocking ultraviolet rays from the sun, rays which can cause skin cancer if you (8) exposed to them. We might (9) have known about the process (10) it not been for the work of two American scientists, Frank Rowland and Mario Molina. A number of industries fought against their conclusions, and might have won (11) the evidence not been so clear. Rowland and Molina received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1995 for their work on the ozone layer, but (12) which we might today be facing an even greater problem.

J Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between three and eight words, including the word given.

- Without this new diet, Henry would never have lost so much weight. **it**
Had this new diet, Henry would never have lost so much weight.
- Unless the plans change, we'll see you on the 19th. **no**
Provided the plans, we'll see you on the 19th.
- If you applied now, there's a good chance you would get the job. **apply**
Were , there's a good chance you would get the job.
- I didn't know about your problem so I didn't offer to help. **have**
If I'd known about your problem, to help.
- It could get cold at night, so take some warm clothes. **in**
Take some warm clothes cold at night.
- I'd love to travel the world if I didn't have to pay off my mortgage. **having**
Were to pay off my mortgage, I'd love to travel the world.
- Ten years ago, people would have complained at seeing this film. **seen**
Had , they would have complained.
- Drivers are allowed to park here if they display a local resident permit. **condition**
Drivers are allowed to park here they display a local resident permit.