

Conditionals

When to use Conditionals?

To speculate about

- What will happen
- What could happen
- What we wish would happen
- What might have happened

If a certain condition is fulfilled



Zero
Conditional

First
Conditional

Second
Conditional

Third
Conditional

Common features

- All statements contain the word “If”
- All have two parts:
 - 1.) the condition part (contains “If” or “When”)
 - 2.) the result part
- The condition part has an effect on the result part
- The order of the sentence can change
- Examples:
 - If you eat a lot (the condition part), you get fat. (the result part)
 - If I won the lottery (condition part), I would buy a big house. (result part)

Zero Conditional

For things that are 100% TRUE

General/scientific truths → If ice melts, it becomes water.

Facts → If you cut your finger, you bleed.

Habits → If I order tea, I ask for milk and sugar.

The way you form a zero conditional sentence

IF/WHEN + Present Simple (S + V), Present Simple (S + V)

Examples:

If (When) people eat too much, they get fat.

If (When) I don't study, I fail the exams.

First Conditional

Used for possible situations in the future →
If you leave now, you won't be late.

First (REAL) Conditional → we use it when there is a high probability that something will happen IN THE FUTURE if a certain condition is fulfilled.

The way you form a first conditional sentence

IF + Present Simple (S+V), Future Simple (S + WILL/WON'T + V)

Examples:

If you leave now, you won't be late.

If you study a lot, you will pass the exam.

Second Conditional

Used to express unreal/imaginary situations or actions that are impossible and probably not going to happen. The situation is hypothetical.

You can use WERE for all subjects (I were, You were, He/She/It were...)

The way you form a second conditional sentence

IF + PAST SIMPLE (S+V2/-ed,-d), S + WOULD + V

Examples:

If I won the lottery, I would buy a big house. (I probably won't win the lottery, but I imagine what would happen if I won it)

If I were you, I'd(=would) buy a new car. (I can't be you, but I imagine that if I were in your situation, what I would do)

Third Conditional

Used when we talk about situations or actions that did not happen or happened in another way IN THE PAST

We just imagine the situation that would have happened if something had happened in another way

If he had studied harder, he would have passed the exam.
(but we know he didn't study hard and he didn't pass the exam → we just imagine what could have happened)

The way you form a third conditional sentence

IF + PAST PERFECT (S+HAD+V3), S + WOULD (WOULDN'T) HAVE + V3

Examples:

If I had won the lottery, I would have bought a Ferrari. (but I did not win the lottery and I didn't buy a Ferrari either → I just imagine what would have happened if I had won the lottery)

If I hadn't eaten so much, I wouldn't have felt sick (but I did eat a lot, and I felt sick. → I just imagine what would have happened if I hadn't eaten so much)