

Video Worksheet: Academic Conditionals

Language Review

Conditional sentences examples

- State scientific facts in the present tense: *If the corn is milled, starch can be extracted.*
- Show habitual actions in the present or past: *If we misinterpreted the results, we indicated this immediately.*
- Show implications: *If there was legislation for X, it could prevent...*
- Make inferences about the past: *If the project had had more investment, it may have succeeded.*
- Make predictions about the future: *If the results are analysed from an economical perspective, it will define the problem more clearly.*
- Show possible plans or actions: *If you assess the data thoroughly, you might establish the cause of the problem.*
- Give advice / possibilities: *If these solutions are applied, it should reduce the homeless problem significantly.*
- Refer to impossible situations in the present or past: *If the proposal had focused on financial incentives, it would have been more useful.*

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Conditional	Examples
Zero – to show general truths or scientific facts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common in science and business. If + present simple, present simple. If can be substituted with <i>when</i> or <i>whenever</i>. Clauses can be inverted but without a comma. 	<i>If you heat water at 100 degrees, it boils.</i> <i>Athletes sweat a lot if they are dehydrated.</i> <i>When fossil fuels are burned, greenhouse gases are produced.</i> <i>Inflation increases whenever there is a surge in demand for products.</i>
First – to show a possible situation in the future based on a possible or likely condition in the present. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If + present simple, continuous or perfect, will + bare infinitive. Will can be substituted with other modal verbs: <i>can, could, may, might, shall, should, have to, ought to</i>. Provided that / as long as / on condition that can be substituted for <i>only if</i>. Unless can be substituted for <i>except if</i>. Clauses can be inverted but without a comma. Should can replace <i>if</i> to show more formality. 	<i>If brands want to increase their exposure, they will need to have a strong social media platform.</i> <i>University students ought to complain if they are not satisfied with their accommodation.</i> <i>Non-native speakers of English will be considered provided that they can show a good working knowledge of the language.</i> <i>Unless the government changes its plan, the economy will collapse.</i> <i>Should the business fail, the damage could be irreparable.</i>

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Conditional	Examples
Second – to show an unlikely or imaginary situation in the present or future based on a hypothetical condition in the present or future. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If + past simple or continuous, would + bare infinitive. Would can be substituted with <i>might</i> or <i>could</i>. Clauses can be inverted but without a comma. Were + noun + infinitive can substitute if clause in formal contexts. 	<i>If local councils received more funding, it would benefit their local communities immensely.</i> <i>More students from lower-income families could go to university if tuition fees were lowered.</i> <i>Were animal charities to cease receiving donations, there would be little hope remaining for their protection.</i>
Third – to show an imaginary or impossible situation in the past based on a hypothetical condition in the past. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If + past perfect simple or continuous, would + have + past participle. Would can be substituted with <i>might, could</i> and <i>should</i>. Clauses can be inverted but without a comma. Possible to invert <i>had</i> and subject in more formal contexts. 	<i>The 2008 financial crisis could have been prevented if there had been better financial regulation of mortgages.</i> <i>If the government had organised providing free school meals more efficiently, more school children might have been fed more quickly.</i> <i>Had the rules of avoiding large gatherings been followed, many more lives would have been saved in the Spanish flu epidemic.</i>

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Conditional	Examples
Mixed Type 1 – to show an imaginary situation in the present based on a hypothetical condition in the past. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If + past perfect simple or continuous, would + bare infinitive. Clauses can be inverted but without a comma. Would can be substituted with <i>might</i> or <i>could</i>. 	<i>If more bike lanes had been implemented in bigger cities, there would be fewer accidents involving cyclists.</i> <i>The rainforest and its wildlife might be in a better state if palm oil had never been discovered for use in food processing.</i>
Mixed Type 2 – to show an imaginary situation in the past based on a hypothetical condition in the present. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If + past simple or continuous, would + have + past participle. Clauses can be inverted but without a comma. Would can be substituted with <i>might, could</i> and <i>should</i>. 	<i>If we reduced the production of fossil fuels, we would have prevented the world's oceans from warming up.</i> <i>The party might have received more votes if its constituents were younger.</i>

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Exercise 1

Practice the zero conditional by reordering the following sentences. Add punctuation where necessary.

1. watered plants wither if are not die and they

2. travellers than passport they can have six months less if on not their fly

Exercise 2

Practice the first conditional by rewriting the following sentences. Add the correct grammar and punctuation.

1. organisations do not offer an online service then they go out of business

2. they wear a face covering shoppers can enter most supermarkets

Exercise 3

Practice the second conditional by correcting the mistakes in the following sentences.

1. If car companies would make electric cars cheaper, then everyone can afford one.

2. If everyone earned the same as the richest man in the world, we would can buy a Covid-19 vaccine for every single person on the planet.

Exercise 4

Practice the third conditional by circling the best option. If both options are possible, then circle both answers.

1. Zoom video conferencing could not / would not have become so successful if there hadn't been a rise in remote working.

2. If consumers had not been limited to shopping online, companies such as Debenhams might / should have been saved from going into administration.

Exercise 5

Practice mixed conditionals by completing each sentence.

1. If the UK had gone into lockdown earlier, _____

2. If the US had not reversed its decision to withdraw from the World Health Organisation,

Exercise 6

Read the following paragraph about compulsory retirement and complete the gaps with the correct conditional form.

In the UK, the default retirement age of 65 no longer exists. An employee can work into their seventies or eighties if he or she _____ (wish) to, provided that they _____ (be) fit and healthy. For many people this is of great benefit to not only the individual, but also society as a whole. If an older but long-serving employee is forced to retire, the company _____ (need to) replace a wealth of experience and expert knowledge quickly. Also, there are those who firmly believe that should a staff member _____ (make) to retire, it deprives him or her of a choice and devalues their contributions to a firm.

Video

This worksheet accompanies the video: <https://youtu.be/u8yryhfSAF8>

More exercises on conditionals go here: www.academic-englishuk.com/academic-conditionals