



Conditional Sentences

And other expressions of conditions

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Zero Conditional



if/when + present + present simple
if/when + past simple + past simple

We use the Zero or Real Conditional to talk about things that are **generally true in the present or in the past**, in particular laws and rules, or to give instructions if a condition is met.

***If** I **eat** too much chocolate, I **feel** sick.*

***If** you **see** a spider, **run**!*

*It **gets** cold here **when** the sun **goes** down.*

***If** we **called** each other names, my parents **grounded** us for a week.*

First Conditional



if/when + present + future simple/
modal verbs with future meaning

We use the First Conditional to talk about **future** situations we think are **likely** or **probable** to happen.

***If** it **rains** tomorrow, we **won't go** camping.*

***I can't go** out **if** I **don't finish** my homework.*

***If** you **pay** attention, you **may see** a shooting star.*

*They **might arrive** on time **if** there **isn't** much traffic.*

Second Conditional



if+ past simple + modal verb with
future-in-the-past meaning

We use the Second Conditional to talk about **present** or **future** situations we think are **impossible** or **unlikely** to happen.

*I **might work** harder **if** they **paid** me better.*

***If** you really **wanted** to help, you **would be trying** harder.*

***If** you **studied** harder, you **could do** better at school.*

If I were you, I'd **tell** my parents the truth.*

*We use "were" with all subject pronouns in the Second Conditional (Subjunctive mood).

Third Conditional



if + past perfect + future-in-the-past
modal verbs + have + past participle

We use the Third Conditional to **imagine** a **different past**, in which something did or didn't happen, and we also imagine a **different result**.

You **wouldn't have cut** your head **if** you **had been wearing** a safety helmet.

If I hadn't lost my job, I **could have been promoted**.

If she had seen anything, she **would have told** the police.

Mixed Conditionals



mixed second and third conditionals

This type of sentence **combines** a **second** conditional sentence with a **third** conditional sentence. We imagine a **past change** with a present result or a **present change** with a past result.

Past change with present result:

*If I **had gone** to bed earlier last night, I **wouldn't be** so tired now.*

Present change with past result:

*I can't do this alone. If I **could**, I **wouldn't have called** you!*

Other expressions



unless/as long as/so long as/provided
(that)/providing (that)/on condition that

We can use other expressions if we want to set **specific conditions** or **limits** on a situation.

You **become** dehydrated **unless** you **drink** enough water (= **if** you **don't drink** enough water).

I **feel** safe **as long as** you **are** with me.

You **can go** out **providing** (**that**) you've **tidied** your room.

My parents **will let** me go to the party **on condition that** I **pass** all my exams.

Notes

The use of the comma

When the **if clause** comes **before** the **main clause**, it is followed by a **comma**.

If you don't hurry, you'll miss the plane!

When the **if clause** comes **after** the **main clause**, there is **no comma** between the clauses.

You'll miss the plane if you don't hurry!



Notes

Verb Forms

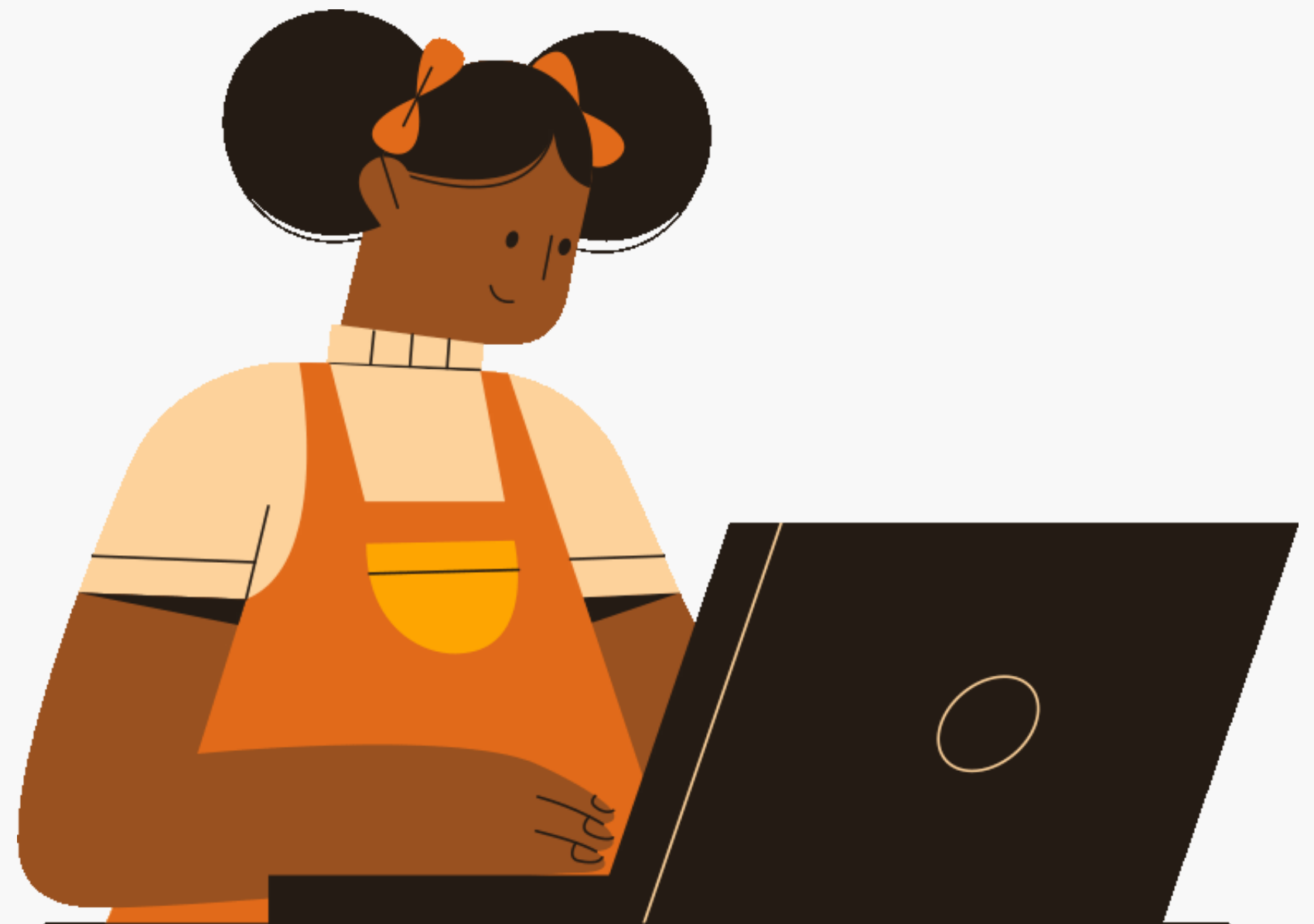
The verbs in the conditional clause may be in the **simple** or **continuous** forms, with a difference in the meaning, either in the present or the past.

*If I **cook**, you do the dishes.*

*If I'm **cooking**, please don't come near the oven.*

*If I **were mugged**, I'd go to the police immediately.*

*If I **were being mugged**, I wouldn't fight back. It could be even more dangerous.*



Notes

"If I was" or "If I were"?

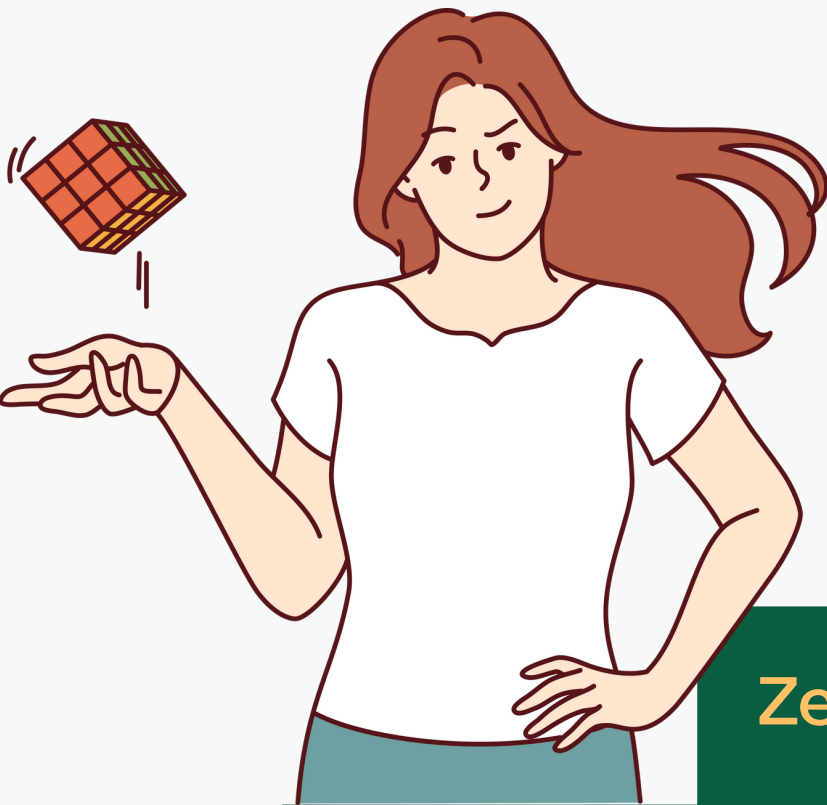
If I/he/she/it were is used when we refer to a **hypothetical** situation. This is a **second conditional** sentence, in which the verb in the conditional clause is in the **subjunctive mood**.

*If I **were** you, I'd be more careful.*

If I/he/she/it was is used when we refer to a **real** situation. This is a **real or zero conditional** sentence, in which the verb in the conditional clause is in the **indicative mood**.

*If I **was** rude, please forgive me.*





Summary

	Zero or Real	First	Second	Third	Mixed
Condition	generally true	possible or likely to happen	imaginary or less likely to happen	imaginary or impossible	imaginary or impossible
Result	present or past	future	present or future	past	present or past