

CONDITIONALS

Ice melts if you heat it.
If you freeze water, it becomes a solid.
Plants die if they don't get enough water.
If my husband has a cold, I usually catch it.
If you mix red and blue, you get purple.
If Bill phones, tell him to meet me at the cinema.
Ask Pete if you're not sure what to do.

Meaning/Use

Form

If it rains, you will get wet
If you don't hurry, we will miss the train
If you drop that glass, it will break.
Nobody will notice if you make a mistake.
If I have time, I'll finish that letter.
What will you do if you miss the plane?
If you drop that glass, it might break.
I may finish that letter if I have time

Meaning/Use

Form

If the weather wasn't so bad, we would go to the park (...but it is bad, so we can't go)
If I was the Queen of England, I would give everyone £100. (...but I'm not, so I won't)
I would visit her if I had time. (= I haven't got time but I might have some time)
If I were you, I'd give up smoking (but I could never be you)
If I was a plant, I would love the rain. b.
If I knew where she lived, I would go and see her.
I would be working in Italy if I spoke Italian. (but I don't speak Italian, so I am not working in Italy).
She would be living with Jack if she wasn't living with her parents. (but she is living with her parents so she's not living with Jack).

Meaning/Use

Form

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'd known you were coming I'd have baked a cake (but I didn't know, and I haven't baked a cake).
If I'd known you were in hospital, I would have visited you. b. I would have bought you a present if I'd known it was your birthday. c. If they'd had a better goalkeeper they wouldn't have lost the game. d. If you had told me you were on the Internet, I'd have sent you an e-mail. e. Would you have bought an elephant if you'd known how much they eat?
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 and so I didn't see him).
If she hadn't got a job in London (but she did), she would have been working in Paris (but she wasn't).

Meaning/Use

Form

PRESENT RESULT OF PAST CONDITION

I would be a millionaire now if I had taken that job. If you'd caught that plane you'd be dead now. If you hadn't spent all your money on CDs, you wouldn't be broke.

Meaning/Use

Form

PAST RESULT OF PRESENT OR CONTINUING CONDITION

'If I wasn't afraid of spiders' is contrary to present reality - I **am** afraid of spiders, and 'I would have picked it up' is contrary to past reality - I **didn't** pick it up.

'If we didn't trust him' is contrary to present reality - we **do** trust him, and 'we would have sacked him' is contrary to past reality - we **haven't** sacked him.

Meaning/Use

Form

If or when?

We use if for something that we think might happen.	We use when for something that we know will happen.
If you hear any news, can you ring me immediately? (You might hear some news.) I'll probably go for a walk later on if it stays fine. (It might stay fine.)	When you hear some news, can you ring me immediately? (You will hear some news.) I'll make myself an omelette when I get home tonight.(I will get home tonight.)
We use if (not when) for something impossible or Imaginary If I were you, I'd refuse.	
We can use either if or when in contexts where they mean 'every time'. If you run, you use up energy. When you run, you use up energy.	

.If and unless

I can't see unless I wear glasses The doctor will be here unless she's called to an emergency. Unless you can pay your bills, you'll have to leave. I wouldn't say that unless I believed it	/ can't see if I don't wear glasses The doctor will be here if she isn't called to an emergency If you can't pay your bills, you'll have to leave I wouldn't say that if I didn't believe it.
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Type 1 and type 2

1. Complete the conversation. Put in the correct form of the verb. You may need to use will or would.

Matthew: I haven't forgotten your birthday, you know. If you like, (►) I'll book (1 / book) a table for Thursday at our favourite restaurant.

Emma: My birthday is on Wednesday, Matthew. You're playing basketball then, aren't you? If you cared for me, (1)..... (you / not / play) basketball on my birthday.

Matthew: What's the difference? If (2)..... (we / go) out on Thursday, it'll be just the same. If (3).....(I / not / play), I'd be letting the team down.

Emma: Yes, I suppose (4).....(it / be) a disaster if you missed one game.

Well, if (5)..... (you / think) more of your friends than you do of me, you can forget the whole thing.

Matthew: I just don't understand you sometimes, Emma.

Emma: If (6)..... (you / think) about it, you'd understand. And I think (7).....(it / be) better if we forgot all about my birthday.

Matthew: Don't be silly, Emma. If you get into one of your bad moods, (8)(it / not / do) any good.

Emma: If you were interested in my feelings, (9) (I / not / get) into a bad mood.

2. What might you say in these situations? Use a conditional sentence.

► You think Emma should book a seat on the train. The alternative is having to stand.

If Emma doesn't book a seat on the train, she'll have to stand.

- 1 You didn't know how unpopular Jason was when you invited him to your party.
- 2 Warn your friend not to put too many tins into the plastic bag or it'll break.
- 3 You haven't got a pen, so you can't write down the address.
- 4 You should have started your project earlier. You're so far behind now.
- 5 Your friend might need some help. If so, tell her to give you a ring.
- 6 The automatic result of the door opening is the fan coming on.

Type 2 and type 3

3. Complete the conversations. Put in the correct form of the verb.

Use the past simple, the past perfect, would, or would have.

► Mike: You look tired.

Harriet: Well, if you hadn't woken (you / not / wake) me up in the middle of the night, I wouldn't be (I / not be) so tired.

1. Rita: Is Trevor a practical person?

Laura: Trevor? No, he isn't. If (he / be) practical,(he / put) those shelves up a bit quicker. It took him ages.

2. Tom: Why are you sitting in the dark?

David: Let's just say that if(I / pay) my electricity bill last month, (I / not be) in the dark now.

3. Matthew: Why are you so angry with me? All I did yesterday was play basketball.

Emma: If (you / love) me,(you / not / leave) me here all alone on my birthday.

4. Provide the corresponding conditional form for each of the following situations

1. We didn't see The Two Towers because the cinema was closed.
2. She doesn't understand because you haven't explained the situation to her.
3. You won't get a promotion if your work doesn't improve.
4. I never eat octopus because I get sick.
5. We didn't pick you up at the station because you didn't phone us.
6. The government won't win the elections unless they create employment.
7. I'll buy I new computer provided that I get a rise in salary.
8. She wanted to buy that picture, but she didn't have enough money.
9. Whenever I make a promise, I keep it.
10. We haven't got any matches, so we can't light a fire.