

A scenic photograph of an autumn landscape. A large tree with vibrant yellow and orange leaves stands in the foreground on the left. The background shows rolling hills and mountains under a clear blue sky. The foreground is filled with tall, golden-brown grasses.

Grammar

Conditionals

Structure

Order

How to formulate the conditionals correctly

Verb forms

Present, past, future, ...

Mixed Conditionals

How and why?

Advanced conditionals

Alternative linkers

If vs Whether

What are the differences?

Inverted Conditionals

How and why



“

**“If you can keep your head,
when all about you.
Are losing theirs,
and blaming it on you... ”**

— Rudyard Kipling

Conditionals

Understanding the basics

Sometimes we call them 'if clauses'. They describe the result of something that **might happen** (in the present or future) or **might have happened but didn't** (in the past) . They are made using different English verb tenses.

It is important to understand **how** to construct them, **why** and **when** they are used and what the differences between Spanish and English are.

Conditionals describe the result of a certain condition. The *if* clause tells you the condition (*If you study hard*) and the main clause tells you the result (*you will pass your exams*). The order of the clauses does not change the meaning

If you study hard,

Condition

you will pass your exam

Result

You will pass your exam

Result

if you study hard

Condition

Order

How to form a conditional

Types of conditionals

- Zero conditionals
 - First conditionals
 - Second conditionals
 - Third conditionals
-



Zero Conditional

Certainties



We can use if-clauses with a present tense to introduce certain conditions under which something is true:

- If you press this button, the Netflix video pauses.

Present simple

present simple

- The conclusion remains the same if environmental changes are considered.

Present simple

present simple

Notice that here 'if' has a meaning similar to 'when'

In **First Conditionals** we usually use a present tense verb in the *if*-clause to talk about the future.

If you leave now, you'll be able to catch the 5pm train.

Present simple

future

If I'm going to London, I'll take my umbrella.

Present continuous

future

First Conditionals

Possibilities

Offers, Advice & Instructions

Alternatively, we can use an imperative in the main clause to make offers, offer advice or give instructions.

- Please take another sandwich if you're hungry.
- If you have a mobile phone, please check that is turned off.
- Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Possible future events

Extra verb structures

We can talk about possible future events with a present perfect verb in the *if*-clause and a future form (will, present cont., be going to) in the main clause.

- I'll lend you *War and Peace* if I've finished it before you go on holiday

future

present perfect

- If you haven't paid the bill by Friday, we will cut off your service

present perfect

future

- If I've failed my English test again, I'm going to quit my studies. (I have already taken the test)

present perfect

future

- If I fail my English test again, I'm going to give up the course (I have not taken the test)

present simple

future



The subjunctive

An unreal problem

The subjunctive is a problem for most learners of English. Try to remember the following tips.

1. The hypothetical subjunctive is formed by the first person plural of the past simple ('we')
2. Only noticeable difference with verb 'to be' – were
3. The hypothetical subjunctive is *only* used to hypothesise.

The third conditional is used to talk about something that might have happened in the past, but didn't. We use if + past (subjunctive) perfect and would have + past participle in the main clause. We can also use might/could have instead of would have.

- If I had known her phone number, I would have called her.

Past perfect

Conditional + perfect

- She would have helped you if you had told her.

conditional + perfect

Past perfect

Third Conditionals

Impossibilities



Making transactions



Translations

PHRASE	SIGNIFICADO
If I had been there, I wouldn't have participated.	Si yo hubiera estado allí, no habría participado.
She wouldn't have bought it if she had known that.	No lo habría comprado si hubiera sabido eso.
You would have learned more if you had attended all the classes.	Habríais aprendido mas si hubierais asistido a todas las clases.
I you had some coins, you wouldn't need change.	Si tuvieras monedas, no necesitarías cambio.
There'll be tickets if she goes now.	Habrán entradas si ella va ahora.
If there were a back door, it would be easier to get the piano in.	Si hubiera una puerta de atrás, seria mas fácil meter el piano.
If the prices don't come down, we will keep renting	Si los precios no bajan, seguiremos alquilando.
Which one would you have chosen if you had to choose?	¿Cuál de los dos habrías elegido si hubieras tenido que elegir?

In some conditionals, mixed tenses are used. These tenses are used to talk about possible consequences if situations were or had been different.

- If bob weren't so Lazy, he would have passed the exam easily

past

would + present perfect

- If Brian had won the lottery last year, he would be in the Bahamas now.

Past perfect

would + infinitive.

Mixed Conditionals

Alternative consequences

Alternatives to 'if'

1. Unless

'Unless' is used in conditionals with the meaning 'except if'. We use present tenses to talk about the future

- You can't travel on this train **unless** you have a reservation
- **Unless** it rains, I'll pick you up this evening at 6pm ('unless it will rain')

Alternatives to 'if'



As long as you love me...

2. As long as

We use 'as long as' to refer to the intended duration of a plan or idea, most commonly referring to the future. We also use the present simple to refer to the future after 'as long as'

- I'll remember this class **as long as** I live.
- The children are allowed to go **as long as** they let their parents know when they arrive.
- You can borrow my car **as long as** you don't drive too fast.

Alternatives to 'if'

Provided/Providing that

3. Provided that

The conjunctions 'provided that' and 'providing that' can interchangeably be used to mean 'if – on the condition that'.

- She will help me provided that I promise to do her homework.
- Providing that you went to the party, I would go as well.

We can omit 'that' if we prefer.



Whether Rules



- Can be followed by “or not”
- After a preposition and before an infinitive
- After certain verbs: advise, choose, consider, depend on, discuss, talk about, think about.
- In a clause acting as a subject or complement

If and whether can both be used to say people are not sure about something

Whether Examples



Whether or not

I didn't know whether or not John was coming

OR

I didn't know whether John was coming or not.

After a preposition

We argued about whether white wine or red wine was better for you.

He worried about whether to do an English course or spend more time with his family

Whether Examples



After certain verbs

You should consider whether the car you are interested in is good value.

It depends on whether Jane is able to get a day off.

In a clause

Whether she agrees to the proposal remains to be seen

The first issue is whether he knew he was committing a crime

Inverted Conditionals

Understanding and using them



By this point you obviously know conditionals already. But perhaps you're not aware that we can make our conditionals even more interesting by using inverting them.

We invert conditionals mostly to sound more formal, but also because it draws attention to the sentence and it can even sound more natural than a 'normal' conditional.

The three conditionals are inverted like this:

1. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.
2. Were they to lose the match, they would be demoted.
3. Had I known about the pandemic, I would have bought Zoom shares.

Inverted Conditionals

Overview

When you invert the first conditional, the 'if' is eliminated and replaced by 'should' and the verb after the subject is no longer conjugated.

Future Conditionals

- A. If you decide to come, please telephone
 - B. *Should you* decide to come, please telephone.**
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- A. If he is too late, he will not be able to join us.
 - B. *Should he* be too late, he will not be able to join us.**
-

Present Conditionals

When you invert the second conditional, the 'if' is eliminated and replaced by 'were' and the subject and then a verb in the infinitive.

- A. If I knew 100 languages, I would be considered a genius
 - B. *Were I* to know 100 languages, I would be considered a genius**
-
- A. If we had children, we'd need to move to a bigger house.
 - B. *Were we* to have children, we'd need to move to a bigger house.**

Many English learners incorrectly believe that the second conditional is in the past.

When you invert the third conditional, the 'if' is eliminated and replaced by 'had' and the subject and then a verb in the past participle.

- A. If he had understood the problem, he wouldn't have committed those mistakes
- B. *Had he understood* the problem, he wouldn't have committed those mistakes.**
- C. If I had known_it was her birthday, I would have bought her a gift.
- D. *Had I* known it was her birthday, I would have bought her a gift.**

Past Conditionals

Thanks!

Does anyone have any questions?