



HYPOTHESIZING



CONDITIONAL CLAUSES

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Conditional sentences are usually divided into two parts (called clauses):

- the if clause
- the main clause

We usually separate the two clauses with a comma.

If can be replaced by WHETHER, UNLESS (if ... not) or IN CASE (because of the possibility).

TYPE I

FORM: If + present simple / will future

First conditionals are based on facts in present time. They express a possible, likely condition and its result.

- If you **pass** your exam, I'll **buy** you lunch.

TYPE II

FORM: If + past simple / would + infinitive

Second conditionals express a situation, which is contrary to reality in the present and future, which is why the tense shifts from present to past. They express an unlikely or hypothetical condition and its result.

- If I **were** taller, I'**d join** the police force.
- What **would** you **do** if you **won** the lottery?

TYPE III

FORM: If + past perfect / would have + past participle

Third conditionals are not based on fact. They express a situation which is contrary to reality in the past. This unreality is shown by a tense shift from Past Simple to Past Perfect.

- If you'**d come** to the party, you'**d have had** a great time.
- I **wouldn't have met** my wife if I **hadn't gone** to France.

MIXED CONDITIONALS

Sometimes, each of the clauses can have a different time reference. The result is a mixed conditional.

- If we **had eaten** (*we didn't*), we **wouldn't be** hungry (*we are*).
- I **wouldn't have married** her (*I did*) if I **didn't love** her (*I do*).



OTHER STRUCTURES

I wish, If only, I'd rather

The use of tenses with phrases *I wish*, *if only*, and *I'd rather* is similar to the second and third conditionals. Unreality is expressed by a tense shift.

- I wish I **were** taller. (*But I'm not.*)
- If only you **hadn't said** that! (*But you did.*)
- I'd rather you **didn't wear** lots of make-up. (*But you do.*)

The phrase *I wish ... would* can express regret, dissatisfaction, impatience or irritation because someone continues doing something. If we are not talking about willingness, *would* is not used.

- I wish you **'d stop** smoking.
- I wish my birthday **wasn't** in December.