

If clauses

First conditional/if clause type 1

If I see her, I will ask her.

Remember:

The first conditional describes something that is either expected or likely to happen (a real condition) and what will, can or might happen as a consequence of this.

If it rains tomorrow, you will need an umbrella.

If clauses

Second conditional/if clause type 2

If I had enough money, I would buy a new car.

If clauses

Second conditional/ If clause type 2

The second conditional describes imaginary situations (unreal conditions) and results of these conditions that could be possible (despite the fact that the results are based on unreal conditions).

The conditional clause is made with *if* + the past simple and the main clause is made with *would/wouldn't* + the infinitive of the verb without *to*.

If I won the lottery, I would travel around the world.

If clauses type 2 consider suggested developments in the present tense.

When the predicate of the conditional clause is formed with *to be* in the first or third person singular (*I, he, she, it*), we use *were/weren't* in formal English (*if she were more polite, ..., If I were taller, ...*) and *was/wasn't* in less formal English (*if she was more polite, ..., if I was taller, ...*). We always use *were/weren't* for the second person singular or plural.

We can use the second conditional to give advice.

If I were you, I would leave.

Modals

Could and *might* can be used in the main clause instead of *would*.

If I had more time, I could write that book.

If she studied harder, she might get better grades.

Exercises

Complete the sentences with the correct format of the if- and/or main clause:

1. If I (to have) more money, I (to buy) a new car.
*If I **had** more money, I **would buy** a new car.*
2. If it (not, to rain), we could go for a walk.
*If it **wasn't raining**, we could go for a walk.*
3. He would be healthier if he (not, to eat) so much junk food.
*He would be healthier if he **didn't eat** so much junk food.*

Translate:

4. An deiner Stelle würde ich nach Hause gehen.
If I were you, I would go home.
5. Wenn sie morgen nicht arbeiten müsste, könnte sie mit uns zu Abend essen.
*If she **didn't have to work tomorrow**, she could join us for dinner.*
6. Du könntest dich mit José unterhalten, wenn du Spanisch sprechen würdest.
You could converse with José if you spoke Spanish.
7. Wenn du kein Auto hättest, müsstest du laufen.
*If you **didn't have a car**, you would have to walk.*