

Time Clauses

When I see you tomorrow, I will tell you everything.

Refers to the future. This is going to happen for 100%, the question is only the time – when.

Other time conjunctions: e.g. while, as soon as, after, before, until

If we speak about conditionals, there are always two important things we have to focus on.

- 1) Which time the sentence refers to
- 2) Is it real or unreal? Do we believe that the condition can come true or not?

The if-clause is a condition which conditions the main clause. It means that the condition must come true and then the activity, action in the main clause happens as well.

There are fixed patterns we have to follow when building a conditional.

Zero Conditional

If you heat ice, it melts.

If I fly, I am scared.

Pattern: IF + PRESENT, PRESENT.

Time: Present

Real – always true, a fact, the law of nature

This is not a real condition. This is a fact, this happens all the time when the condition comes true. It does not have to be only the nature, it can be my personal facts.

1st Conditional

If I see you tomorrow, I will tell you everything.

Pattern: IF + PRESENT, WILL.

Time: Future / Present

Real

I believe this condition will come true (real), we can say for 80%, I only keep these 20% for the possibility that it will not.

2nd Conditional

If I saw you tomorrow, I would tell you.

Pattern: IF + PAST, WOULD.

Time: Present / Future

Unreal / Hypothetical

I believe this condition will not come true (unreal), we can say for 80%, I only keep these 20% for the possibility that it will.

Or we can have a hypothetical situation (mainly refers to present), I am thinking of something which is the opposite to reality.

If I was the president, I would change a lot of laws. (I am not the president)

If I was taller, I would play basketball. (I am not tall, therefore I do not play basketball)

3rd Conditional

If I had seen you yesterday, I would have told you.

Pattern: IF + PAST PERFECT, WOULD + PERFECT INFINITIVE

Time: Past

Unreal / Hypothetical

This a condition in the past which influenced something else in the past. I cannot change the past, so I am only hypothetically thinking what would have been different if this condition had come true.

We express regret, or criticism.

Mixed Conditionals

Unreal – 2nd and 3rd

In a mixed condition we mix two different conditionals, the most common mixture is the 2nd and 3rd as they are both unreal.

More common situation is that something in the past (the condition) influenced something now.

Therefore, we mix the condition in the past (3rd) and result in the present (2nd)

2nd Conditional

If I saw you tomorrow, I would tell you.

Time: Present / Future

UNREAL

3rd Conditional

If I had seen you yesterday, I would have told you.

Time: Past

UNREAL

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

The reality is: I didn't go to bed early yesterday, so I am tired now.

This is me expressing regret about something I did in the past – went to bed late – and now there is a result I don't like – I am tired.

A bit less common situation is the condition in the present which influenced something which happened in the past.

The condition is usually a characteristics, something that is true all the time, general truth or fact.

2nd Conditional

If I saw you tomorrow, I would tell you.

Time: Present / Future

UNREAL

3rd Conditional

If I had seen you yesterday, I would have told you.

Time: Past

UNREAL

If he **wasn't** such a fast driver, **he wouldn't have** had the accident yesterday.

He is a fast driver, he always drives fast, it is a fact. Yesterday he had an accident because he was, as usual, driving fast.

If he **was** a generous person, **he would have lent** you the money yesterday.

He is not a generous person. That is his characteristics. It is always true. You asked him yesterday to lend you some money, and because he is not generous, he didn't lend you anything.