10 conditional and *if*-sentences (1)

real conditions (first conditional)

- *if* + present simple + *will / won't (do)*
  This shows the results in the future of a real situation, with possible or likely results.
  *If you eat all the ice-cream, **you'll be** sick!*

- other variants
  If can also be followed by *can / can't*, present perfect (to emphasize completion),
  going to, present continuous with future meaning.
  ***If you can't answer** Exercise 1, you won't be able to do Exercise 2.*
  ***If you've finished** washing the floor, I'll help you clean the kitchen.*
  ***If you're going to buy** a car, I'll lend you some of the money.*
  ***If you're going** to the shops, I'll come with you!*

  The second clause can contain *could* requests, *be able to, can, going to,* imperative, *had better,*
  could and *might* etc.
  *If I give you the money, **could you get** me some stamps?*
  *If you've finished washing the floor, **you can start cleaning** the kitchen.*
  *If it rains this afternoon, **we're going to stay** in and watch some DVDs.*
  *If you're going to buy a car, **make sure** you get it checked by a garage.*
  *If you're going to the shops, **you'd better take** some money!*
  *If Cole scores now, that **could be** the end of the match!*

future results: *if* clauses with *will*

- There are some *if*-sentences that describe the possible results of an offer. In these sentences, *will* is
  used in the *if*-clause.
  *I'll talk to your teacher, **if that will stop you worrying** so much.*

- In some *if*-sentences, *if* is followed by emphasised *will*, meaning 'insist on', or *won't* meaning 'refuse-
  to'.
  ***If you will wear** such thin clothes, of course you'll feel cold!*
  ***If you won't listen** to common sense, there's no point my talking to you.*

- *If* can be followed by *will* and *would* as polite request forms.
  ***If you'll just wait** here, **I'll tell** Mr Brown that you've arrived.*
  ***If you'd just fill** in this form, **I'll check** the details.*

unreal conditions (second conditional)

- *if* + past simple + *would (do)*
  This shows the results which would follow from an imaginary situation, with impossible or unlikely
  results.
  ***If** the Earth **didn't have** a Moon, there **wouldn't** be any tides.*

- *Could* and *might* are often used instead of *would*, as are other modals.
  ***If we all worked** together, we **could solve** the problem faster.*

- The difference between real and unreal may be a matter of speaker choice and context.
  If you buy a bike, *you'll* get a lot fitter.
  (You are really thinking of buying one – perhaps we are in the bike shop.)
  If you bought a bike, *you'd* get a lot fitter.   (We are only discussing possibilities.)

impossible past conditions (third conditional)

- *if* + past perfect + *would have (done)* / (passive *would have been done*)
  Used for the results which would follow from an imaginary past situation. As we cannot change the past, this is an impossible condition. Passive forms are common.
  If the ship had had more lifeboats, more passengers *would have been* saved.
  If the ship hadn't hit an iceberg, *it wouldn't have* sunk.
  If another ship hadn't arrived soon afterwards, none of the passengers *would have been saved*.

- *Could have* and *might have* are often used instead of *would have*, as are other modals.
  If the ship had been travelling more slowly, *it might have avoided* the iceberg.

mixed conditions

- *if* + past perfect + *would (do)*
  Used for an imagined or actual event in the past with a result in the present.
  If she had worn her seat-belt, *she would still be* alive.
  If you hadn't given me a lift, *I'd probably still be* at the station!

- *if* + past simple + *would have (done)*
  Used for a present state which has influenced past events.
  If you weren't so lazy, *you'd have finished* your work by now.
  If she was better-qualified, *she would have got* the job.