

What are conditional forms?

Conditional forms are used to talk about a condition – something which must happen first so that something else can happen.

There are mainly three conditional forms.

The first conditional is used to talk about real and possible situations. It is used to talk about events that could happen in the present or future. In the first conditional we use a simple present tense in the if-clause and will + infinitive in the result clause.

If it rains I will open my umbrella.

If she doesn't come in time, we will have to go without her.

If I get my raise, I will buy a car.

If I win the first prize, I will be absolutely happy.

The second conditional is used to speculate about unreal, improbable events in the present or future. In the second conditional, we use a simple past tense in the if-clause and would + infinitive in the result clause.

If I got my raise, I would buy a car.

If I won the first prize, I would be absolutely happy.

If you studied hard, you would pass the test.

The third conditional is used to talk about imaginary past events. In the third conditional, we use a past perfect tense in the if-clause and would have + past participle in the result clause.

If you had studied harder, you would have passed.

If she had married me, she would have been happier.