



## Unit 60 – If (*If you happen to be in town.. If it weren't for seatbelts..*)

A) Real conditionals – we normally use a present tense verb in the if-clause to refer to the future:

-> **If anyone calls** for me, tell them I'll be back in the office by 3pm.

However, 'be going to + verb' can be used instead of a present verb to refer to a future event:

-> We'll have to work at a faster pace **if we're going to finish** this project before the deadline.

To give instructions or advice use an imperative in the main clause:

-> **Call me if** you arrive to the station early. **If** you feel tired, **take a nap** downstairs on the sofa.

For certain outcomes or conditions that occur as a result of something else, use an if-clause with a present verb:

-> **If we take** climate change into account, global temperatures have increased by one degree since 1880.

-> You can activate the voice command **if you select** this function. (here, **if** can be substituted with **when**)

Future events can also be referred to using the present perfect in the if-clause:

-> I'll drop by and pick you up **if I've finished** work by 6pm.

-> **If he hasn't gotten paid** by Friday, we're going to file a complaint.

To indicate something that may be possible, but not very likely, use 'if .. (should) happen to':

-> **If you happen to** be in town next weekend, be sure to drop by and visit!

-> **If you should happen to** see Phil, could you tell him I'm looking for him? (*'should' = more polite*)

B) Unreal conditionals – normally, the past simple pattern is used to express imaginary future situations, however when the outcome in the if-clause is unlikely, we can use 'if .. were + to-infinitive':

-> There is a rumor that the owner will move the team. Fans would be irate **if it were to happen**. (*..if it happened.*)

**Tip:** -> This pattern can also be used to be more polite: -> **If you were to buy** now, I'd offer an additional 10% off.

To express an outcome that depended on another circumstance (or person), use 'if it weren't for + noun phrase':

-> **If it wasn't for the life jacket**, I may have actually drowned. *or: Were it not for the.. (more formally)*

-> **If it weren't for Jeff's quick thinking**, she could have been seriously hurt.

C) When the first verb in the conditional if-clause is **were, should** or **had**, we can omit 'if' to convey a formal tone:

-> **Were this** to happen again, you'd be immediately suspended. *or: 'If this were* to happen again..'

-> **Should you** have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us. *or: 'If you should* have any questions..'

-> **Had he** called yesterday, we may have been able to help him. *or: 'If he had* called yesterday..'

D) In conditionals, **will** is usually not used in the if-clause except in the following situations:

i) when referring to the result of something in the main clause:

-> Call me just before the meeting **if it will help** you feel better. *or: '..if it helps* you feel better.'

ii) when making polite requests:

-> If you **will** take a moment to review the agenda, we can begin the meeting. *or: 'If you would* take..'

iii) when indicating a refusal to do something (in the negative form):

-> Don't bother inviting them **if they won't** even answer the phone.

E) To introduce a comparison with a situation in the main clause, use 'as if' followed by a noun phrase, -ing clause, past-participle(-ed) clause, or to-infinitive. We use this when something appears to be the case but it is not:

-> He walked into the meeting late **as if everything was fine**.

-> Ellie just kept on talking **as if nothing had happened**.

-> She let out a loud sigh **as if exhausted** from the day's work.

-> He opened his mouth **as if to protest** but then thought better of it.

Note that we can also use 'as though' instead of 'as if' to convey the same basic meaning:

-> The weather looked **as though** it would clear up in the afternoon.

Additionally, 'as if' can be substituted with 'like' to communicate a less formal tone:

-> It looked **like** (as if) the project was going to be approved by the finance team before getting canceled.



## Unit 60 – Exercises:

60.1 – Complete the sentences with an **imperative** (1-4) and an **if-clause** (5-8). **(60-A)**

1. If you want to be successful .. **work as hard as you possibly can in life.**
2. If you want to go on holiday .. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. If you aren't busy tomorrow .. \_\_\_\_\_.
4. If it rains anytime this week .. \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Take some aspirin and lie down .. \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Calm down and take a deep breath .. \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Take a break and go for a walk .. \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Be sure to pack warm clothes .. \_\_\_\_\_.

60.2 – If possible, rewrite the italicized parts of the sentences with **happen to**. **(60-A)**

1. *If you won a million dollars*, what would you do?  
**If you happened to win a million dollars**, what would you do?
2. *If it rains this afternoon*, we'll have lunch indoors instead of in the garden.  
\_\_\_\_\_, we'll have lunch indoors instead of in the garden.
3. That's an interesting offer. *If I were you*, I would really give it some serious consideration.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. *If it snows on Christmas Eve*, we'll finally have a white Christmas!  
\_\_\_\_\_.
5. *If I hadn't lost your number*, I would've called you as soon as I got home.  
\_\_\_\_\_.

60.3 – Match the sentence halves. **(60-A/B/C/D)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. If they were to offer me the position    | a) I would have scolded him for acting that way.       |
| 2. Had he lent me the money yesterday       | b) could you drop Dan off at the bank on the way?      |
| 3. If you will take your seats everyone     | c) I'd have a much better view. Thanks.                |
| 4. If you should see Kate at the library    | d) we will start the meeting right away.               |
| 5. Were he actually my own brother          | e) I would seriously consider taking it.               |
| 6. If it hadn't been for his rich lifestyle | f) there is no way I'd be alive today.                 |
| 7. If you happen to go downtown today       | g) I would have paid him back already.                 |
| 8. If you were to step to the right a bit   | h) could you give this book to her for me?             |
| 9. Should you be at home at 1pm today       | i) would you mind signing for a package I have coming? |
| 10. If it were not for your quick thinking  | j) there is no way she would've married him.           |

60.4 – Complete the sentences with your own ideas using **as if** or **as though**. **(60-F)**

1. Your colleague looks completely burned out. You say to him, '\_\_\_\_\_.'
2. When you were talking to Mike on the phone late last night, he sounded different and said some strange things to you. He sounded \_\_\_\_\_.
3. You could smell the dog from far away. He needed a bath. He smelled \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Your friend comes into the room looking nervous. Her face is white and she's breathing anxiously.  
You say to her, '\_\_\_\_\_.'

Now, complete the sentences with **'it looks/sounds as though/if'** using your own ideas. **(60-F)**

5. Kim hasn't arrived and the movie is starting soon. -> You say, 'It looks \_\_\_\_\_.'
6. You hear an ambulance coming and two damaged cars are sitting in the middle of an intersection.  
-> You state '\_\_\_\_\_.'
7. Kara and Kylie have finished telling you all of the interesting things they did on holiday.  
-> You reply '\_\_\_\_\_.'