

The Writing Center

DLA: Conditionals



This DLA is a writable PDF form. You can enter your answers directly into this document.

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Do not complete this form in a web browser. You will not be able to save your work.

Student Name:

Important Note

To get completion credit for this DLA, make sure you complete all the required activities. If you'd like help while working on a specific DLA, you can meet with a specialist at the Writing Center. Keep in mind that you might need to schedule a second appointment to review your work, check your understanding, and get your completion credit. You can only review **ONE** DLA per appointment. (Check the last section of this DLA for information on making your appointment and receiving completion credit for your work).

Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

Understanding Conditionals

Conditional sentences are used to express that the action in the main clause (the result) can only take place if a certain condition (the *if*-clause) is fulfilled. One action depends on something else.

Real conditionals describe real-life situations.

Ex: I take a nap if I have a headache. (Real)

Unreal conditionals describe unreal, imaginary situations.

Ex: If I had more time, I would take more classes. (Unreal)

Structure of Conditional Sentences

A conditional sentence is made up of two clauses: a main clause (the result) and the condition (the *if*-clause). There are two basic ways to form a conditional sentence. Both ways are correct and have the same meaning.

Condition (<i>if</i> -clause)	Result (main clause)
If I pass this class,	I will take the upper division course.
Result (main clause)	Condition (<i>if</i> -clause)
I will take the upper division course	if I pass this class.

*Note that you need a comma only when the *if*-clause comes first.

Zero Conditional: Facts & General Truths

We use the zero conditional when the result of the condition is always true, like scientific facts or general truths. We are not thinking about the future or the past, or even the present. We are thinking about a simple fact. With the zero conditional, the condition always has the same result. You could also use this conditional to give advice, to talk about ability, or to give instructions.

We use **present tenses** to talk about the condition. We use the **present tenses, the imperatives, or modals** to talk about the result.

If you **heat** water to 100°C, it **boils**. (simple present)

If you **visit** London, you **should get** an Oyster Card. (modal)

Buy tickets online if you **want** to get discounts. (imperative)

The power **goes** out if too many people **are using** a lot of electricity. (present progressive)

First Conditional: Real Future Possibilities

We are talking about the future. We are thinking about a particular condition or situation in the future, and the result of this condition. There is a real possibility that this condition will happen. We use the simple present tense to talk about the possible condition. The important thing about the first conditional is that **there is a real possibility that the condition will happen**.

We use **simple present** to talk about the condition, and **future tenses or modals of future possibility** to talk about the possible future result.

You **are going to fail** the class if you **don't do** the work. (certainty)

If you **pass** the exam, I'll **buy** you dinner. (certainty)

I **may go** to UCLA if I **qualify**. (possibility)

If he **gets** low grades, he **might not get** a scholarship. (possibility)

If you **get** a raise, we **could go** to Hawaii on vacation. (possibility)

Second Conditional: Untrue or Imaginary Situations

The second conditional can be used to talk about imaginary/impossible present situations, where we are imagining something different from what is really the case. We can also use it to talk about things in the future that are unlikely to happen, as the condition is unlikely to be met.

We use the **past tense** in the condition part and **would/might/could + base** form of the verb for the result.

If I **had** more time, I **would read** more. (certainty) (I don't have more time, so I don't read.)

If you **played** the lottery, you **might have** a chance to win. (possibility) (You don't play, so you can't win.)

We **could travel** around the world if we **were*** rich. (ability) (We're not rich, so we can't travel.)

*For present/future unreal conditionals, you should always use *were*, not *was*.

Third Conditional: Impossible Past

We use the **third conditional** to talk about a condition in the **past** that did **not** happen. That is why there is no possibility for this condition. The third conditional is also like a dream, but with **no possibility** of the dream coming true. The important thing about the third conditional is that both the condition and result were **impossible**.

We use the **past perfect (had + past participle)** tense to talk about the impossible past condition, and **would/could/might + have + past participle** to talk about the impossible past result.

If it **had rained** yesterday, we **would have canceled** the picnic. (It didn't rain yesterday, so we didn't cancel the picnic.)

I **could have given** you a ride if I **had known** you needed it. (I didn't know that you needed a ride, so I didn't give you one.)

I **might not have bought** this computer if I **had read** its reviews online. (I bought the computer because I didn't read the reviews.)

Mixed Conditionals

Sometimes unreal conditional sentences are mixed. This means that the time in the if-clause is not the same as the time in the result. There are many possibilities, but here are a few examples:

Past	Present
If I had won the lottery,	I would be rich.
Present	Past
If I knew Mandarin,	I would have translated the letter for you.
Future	Present
If you were giving that speech tomorrow,	you would be very nervous right now.
Future	Past
If I weren't going on that trip next week,	I would have accepted that new assignment.

Using *Unless*

The word **unless** basically means the same thing as **if ... not**.

Unless you study, you will fail. = **If** you do **not** study, you will fail.

Unless is often used in conditional sentences. It can be used with the zero, first, second, or third conditional. Here are some examples.

Zero Conditional: I stay up late unless I have to work early the next morning. = I stay up late **if** I do **not** have to work early the next morning.

First Conditional: You'll be unhappy **unless** you break up with her. = You'll be unhappy **if** you do **not** break up with her.

Second Conditional: I wouldn't ask her out **unless** you told me it was OK. = I wouldn't ask her out **if** you told me it was **not** OK.

Third Conditional: They wouldn't have come over **unless** we'd invited them. = They wouldn't have come over **if** we had **not** invited them.

Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

□ 1. Review Conditionals

Review the information on this sheet. Then, answer the following questions.

- a. What is a conditional sentence?

- b. What are the four types of conditionals?

2. Online Quiz

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/conditionalsdlaquiz> and take the DLA quiz. You must score at least 75% on the quiz before meeting with a specialist. After you complete the task, please take a screenshot of the page that has your score and show it to your specialist. Do not exit the quiz until you take the screenshot.

Choose 3a or 3b Below

3a. Practice with Your Own Writing

Collect some of your graded work. Find and write down examples of sentences that contain the following conditionals:

Zero Conditional:

First Conditional:

Second Conditional:

Third Conditional:

If you do not have your own essay to work with, please complete the supplemental activity below (3b).

3b. Practice with the Sentences Below

Complete the following sentences with their missing conditions or results. Then label the type of conditional (zero, first, second, or third).

a. If I **hadn't come** to the U.S.,

Type of conditional:

b.

if I **fail** my next exam.

Type of conditional:

c.

if you **need** more grammar practice.

Type of conditional:

d. **I will take** Freshmen Composition unless

Type of conditional:

e.

we would stay home.

Type of conditional:

f.

if I **hadn't taken** this class.

Type of conditional:

g. **Attend** some Writing Center workshops if

Type of conditional:

4. Review the DLA/Receive Completion Credit

1. Go to EAB Navigate and make an appointment (online or in-person).
2. Attend your session and be prepared to explain your understanding of the information you've learned in the DLA. Consider the main concept you learned and how you might use this in your future assignments/classes.
3. If your professor asks you to provide proof, you can review the "appointment summary report" through EAB Navigate (app or desktop). You will find all Writing Center appointments under "appointment summary reports" (app or desktop). Look for the summary report for your DLA appointment. This is where your writing specialist will indicate the title of your DLA and state whether it is "completed" or "not completed." If it is marked as "not completed," book a follow up appointment to complete.

Note: Appointment summary reports are also sent weekly to your instructor on record. If there is an issue, please contact us at writingcenter@mtsac.edu or (909) 274-5325.

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Revised November 2025