We use conditionals to describe the result of something that might happen in the present or in the future.

They usually involve the use of ‘if’ statements. An if-clause expresses a condition, while the main clause expresses the result. Here’s a typical structure of all conditional sentences:

If clause, + main clause.
CONDITION + RESULT

Main clause + if clause.
RESULT + CONDITION

via https://www.englishclub.com/grammar/verbs-conditional.htm

The Zero Conditional

Zero conditionals are used to talk about facts, such as scientific facts, or when the result of the condition is always true.

- If you heat ice, it melts.

[If + Present Simple, ..... + Present Simple]
The **Present Simple** is used in **both** clauses of the statement.

Conditional sentences can be used with other terms instead of ‘if’ such as ‘**when**’.

The use of ‘**when**’ also adds **certainty** to something happening.

- **When the monsoon arrives**, it **floods** the streets.

**[When + Present Simple, ....+ Present Simple]**

**The First Conditional**

Unlike the zero conditional that are generally or almost always true, the first conditional could be associated with **possible situations** or a **possibility** of something that is about to happen **in the future**.

This could be based on an event that is **changing at present** or **could depend on other events** that might happen in the **future**.

In this case, ‘**will**’ is used in the second clause of the statement.

Example 1:

- **If my mother comes home tonight, I will take her out to dinner**

Or

- **If my other comes home tonight, I’ll take her out to dinner.**

**[If + Present Simple, ..... + will + infinitive]**

In the above two conditional types, it is not important whether ‘**if**’ is placed in the first clause of the statement or the second clause. They mean the **same thing** and can be **swapped** in
usage.

- If I go the market, I buy my groceries.
- I buy my groceries if I go to the market.

OR

- When I see my personal tutor, I discuss my problems with him.
- I discuss my problems with my personal tutor when I see him.

Let’s compare these two types of conditional sentences:

Zero Conditional **naturals laws, facts and general truth.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If-Clause</th>
<th>Main Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present simple</td>
<td>Present simple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If temperature is zero, water freezes.**

The 1st Conditional **events or actions that probably happened in future**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If-Clause</th>
<th>Main Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present simple</td>
<td>Future simple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If it rains, I will not go to the park.**

via [http://rock-cafe.info/suggest/zero-and-first-conditional-7a65726f.html](http://rock-cafe.info/suggest/zero-and-first-conditional-7a65726f.html)

Here’s a great video from Papa Teach that explains all English conditionals:
All of the English Conditionals from Papa Teach
See also:

The Second Conditional

The Third Conditional

Mixed Conditionals