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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:

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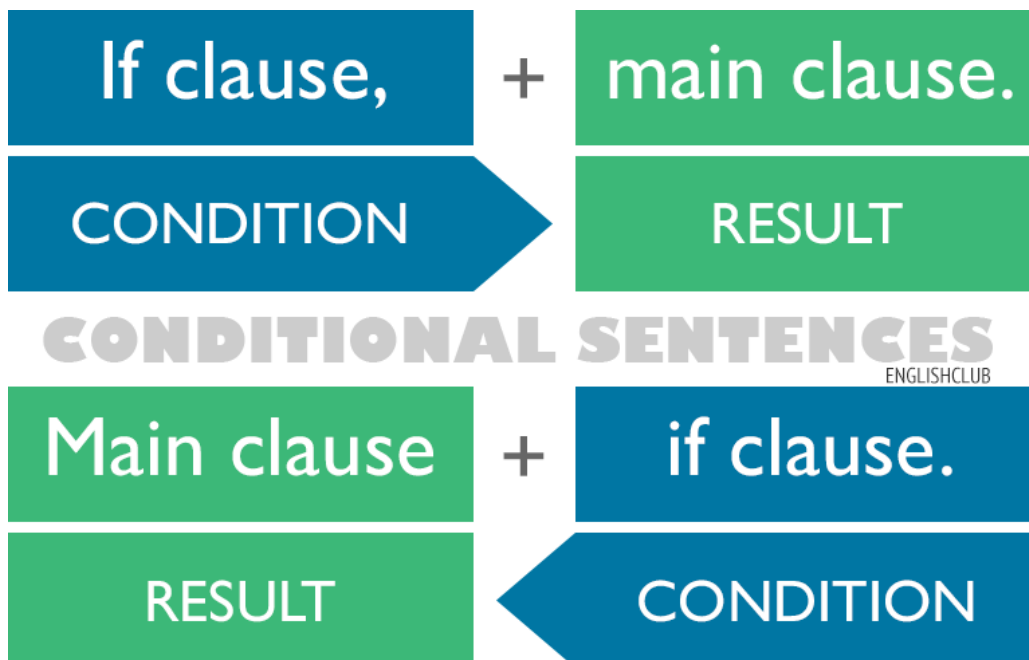
The Zero Conditional

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:

via 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](#)