

TYPE 0

RULES, LAWS OF NATURE, GENERAL TRUTHS ETC.

If + Present Simple → Present Simple

- If you **heat** water to 100 Celsius degrees, it **boils**.
- If you **don't do** your homework, you **don't get** any dessert.



TYPE 1

POSSIBLE, REAL CONDITION AND RESULT IN THE PRESENT OR FUTURE

If + Present Simple → Present Simple / Future

- If it **doesn't** rain, we'll **go** to the park.
- If he **manages to buy** the tickets, we're **going to see** the concert on Friday.
- If I **find** it, I'll **tell** you.



The speaker feels that there is a real chance that the event in the *if* clause will happen.

TYPE 2

POSSIBLE BUT UNREAL CONDITION AND RESULT IN THE PRESENT OR FUTURE

If + Past Simple → Would [do/go/...]

- If I **found** a wallet in the street, I'd **take** it to the police station.
- What **would** you do if you **won** a million dollars?
- If there **were (was)** an election tomorrow, who **would** you vote for?
- If I **were (was)** you, I'd **talk** to him.



The speaker doesn't really expect that the event in the *if* clause will happen, but it isn't impossible.

- If you **took** more exercise, you'd **feel** better.
- I'm not tired. If I **went** to bed now, I **wouldn't** sleep.
- If they **took** a cab, they **could** be there at 5 o'clock.
- If you **read** this book, you **might** be able to pass the exam.

We also use Type 2 to say that if something happens *NOW*, something else will happen. We use Past Simple but the meaning is *present*.



We don't normally use *would* in the *if* part of the sentence. **Exception:** we can use *would* if we politely ask somebody to do something.

- [from a formal letter] I **would** be grateful if you **would** let me know your decision as soon as possible.

TYPE 3

IMPOSSIBLE, UNREAL CONDITION AND RESULT IN THE PAST

If + Past Perfect → Would have [done/gone/...]

- If I **had known** you were in hospital, I **would have gone** to see you.
- If I'd **seen** you, of course I **would have said** hello.
- If I **hadn't been** so tired, I **would have gone** to the party.
- If the weather **hadn't been** so bad, we **could have gone** out.

The events we're talking about are already in the past, so nothing can be done to change them.

