

6.2 Grammar

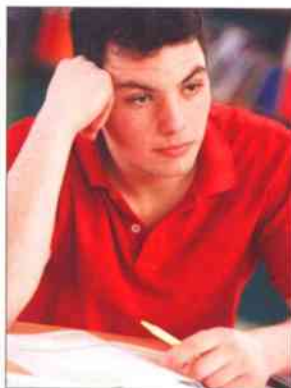
Conditional clauses – alternatives to if

I can form conditional sentences using if, unless, imagine, provided, suppose and inversion.

- 1 'The dog ate my homework' is a typical excuse used by students. In pairs, think of other excuses.
- 2 Read the story. What excuse did the students use for missing their exam? What happened next?

The Exam Question

Imagine you were taking an important exam on Monday, what would you do the weekend before? You almost certainly wouldn't do what two Chemistry students did in Kansas, Missouri. They went to a different city and partied all weekend. They had a great time, but they knew that **unless** they got back in time for the exam, they wouldn't be able to take it. So they drove through the night and got back to college in the early hours of Monday morning. Sadly for them, they overslept and missed the exam. When they found their professor afterwards, they decided to invent a story. They told him that they would have got back for the exam **had they not had a flat tyre**. The professor thought about this for a moment and then agreed that, **provided they arrived before 9 a.m.**, they could take the exam the next day. He placed them in separate rooms and gave them the exam paper. The first question was simple and worth five points. But they were unprepared for the question on the next page:



Question 2 (95 points): Which tyre?

- 3 Read the GRAMMAR FOCUS. Then rewrite the conditional clauses in blue in the story using **if**.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Conditional clauses – alternatives to if

- You use **unless** to mean 'except if'.
*I wouldn't lie to you **unless it was necessary** (= ... if it wasn't necessary.)*
- You use **imagine** or **suppose/supposing** to ask questions.
***Imagine you were getting married**, how would you feel? (= If you were getting married, ...)*
- You use **provided/providing** to create a condition.
*I'll lend you €10 **provided you pay me back** tomorrow ... (= if you pay me back ...)*
- You can use **inversion** in formal contexts – mostly with the auxiliary verbs **were, had or should**.
***Had they followed** my instructions, they wouldn't have got lost. (= If they had followed ...)*

Note: In inversion you do not contract negative forms.

... **had they not called**, we wouldn't have known.

(NOT ... ~~hadn't they called~~ ...)

- 4 Rewrite the conditional sentences using **unless**. Then tick the sentences that are true for you.
 - 1 I'll fail all my exams if I don't revise properly.
*I'll fail all my exams **unless** I revise properly.*
 - 2 I wouldn't be able to do my homework if I didn't have a laptop.
 - 3 I wouldn't study English if I didn't need it to get a job.
 - 4 My parents wouldn't have let me go out last night if I hadn't finished my homework.
 - 5 I'd never get to school on time if my mum didn't wake me up.
 - 6 I can't understand American films if I don't watch them with subtitles.
- 5 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first, using the word in capitals. Use no more than six words, including the word in capitals. Do not change the word in capitals. Then tick the sentences that are true for you.
 - 1 I'll probably go out this evening if I don't get too much homework. **PROVIDED**
I'll probably go out this evening _____ too much homework.
 - 2 If my mum hadn't reminded me, I would've forgotten her birthday. **NOT**
Had _____ me, I would've forgotten her birthday.
 - 3 I'd never eat fast food unless I was absolutely starving. **WASN'T**
If _____, I'd never eat fast food.
 - 4 I'd have watched Mr Bean if I'd known it was on TV last night. **WAS**
Had _____ on TV last night, I'd have watched it.
 - 5 I don't watch football unless my team are playing. **IF**
I don't watch football _____.
 - 6 If I wasn't so tired, I'd go out this evening. **NOT**
Were _____, I'd go out this evening.
 - 7 If I should ever get married, I'd want a huge party. **EVER**
Should _____, I'd want a huge party.
- 6 Use the prompts to write conditional questions. Begin each question with **Imagine ...** or **Suppose ...** and complete it with your own ideas.
 - 1 You can't live anywhere in the world.
***Imagine/Suppose you could live anywhere in the world**, where would you live?*
 - 2 You didn't find €100 in the street yesterday.
 - 3 You're not able to travel back in time.
 - 4 You don't have to live without technology.
 - 5 You didn't see an old man steal something from a shop last week.
 - 6 You can't have three wishes.
- 7 In pairs, ask and answer your questions from Exercise 6.

Grammar Focus page 137