

Phrases with *if*

As if/as though

We use a past tense after *as if/as though* to refer to situations/events which we know are not true:

He speaks **as if/though** he **had** a plum in his mouth (= in an upper class accent). (We know this is not true.)

You look/looked **as if/though** you **had seen** a ghost! (We know you didn't see a ghost.)

They are/were acting **as if/though** nothing **had happened**. (We know something happened.)

We use a present tense after *as if/as though* including Present Perfect to talk about what the situation/event seems like:

You talk about Lady Gaga **as if/though** you **know** her. (Perhaps you know her.)

You look **as if/though** you **have had** a fright. (Perhaps you have had a fright.)

We can use *as if* to show we doubt something or wish it was true:

Did you get a pay rise? **As if!** (colloquial/slang)

Even if

If can combine with the word *even* to refer to an imaginary or unreal condition. It is used to emphasise that although something (unexpected or imagined) might happen, the situation will not change:

Even if she wins the Oscar, it won't change her as a person. (= There is not much chance of her winning the Oscar, but if it happened, it wouldn't change her as a person.)

He wouldn't give us an autograph **even if** we saw him in person after the show. (= Seeing him in person after the show would be quite unexpected, but it wouldn't change anything – we still wouldn't get an autograph from him.)

If necessary/if any/if anything/if ever/if in doubt

In some of these fixed expressions the subject and *be* are left out after *if*:

If necessary, the artist will be contacted to submit other images that meet the specified criteria. (= if it is necessary)
After the premiere there is little **if any** hope that his new film will be another box-office success. (= if there is any hope at all)

If in doubt, parents should watch the film first to see whether it is appropriate for their children. (= if they/parents are in doubt)

Sarah seldom, **if ever**, posts concert reviews and shares pictures on her blog. (= if she ever does)

We can use *if anything* to suggest that something may be the case although it is often different or opposite to what has been implied before:

I can't say my experience as an extra has been all that inspiring. **If anything**, it's made me doubt the whole idea of going into acting.

If so/if not

In complex sentences and in continuous text, we may want to refer back to certain parts of the utterance/text without repeating all the words. In such case, we can avoid repetition by using substitution.

We can substitute *if* clauses with *if so* (positive) and *if not* (negative). They can stand for a whole clause that has come before:

Do you think **X is a good writer**? **If so**, can you recommend one of her books? **If not**, can you give me another suggestion?

I've heard that **Mumford & Sons are giving a concert in December**. **If so**, I'll be going.

1 Rewrite the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first. Use the words in capitals.

1 He isn't a famous playwright, but he acts like someone who is. **AS IF**

_____ ?

2 We have a very small chance of getting tickets for Adele's concert. If we got them, we wouldn't be able to go anyway. **EVEN**

_____ ?

3 If you are not sure, ask somebody who has already seen the play if it's worth seeing. **DOUBT**

_____ ?

4 Do you consider him a talented singer? And if you don't think he is a talented singer, why do you want to see him live in concert? **NOT**

_____ ?

5 I didn't find the plot of his new film very convincing. If it made any impression on me at all, it made me appreciate his previous works more. **ANYTHING**

_____ ?

6 We'll rehearse the songs from morning till night if need be. **NECESSARY**

_____ ?

7 You look pale. Have you had a shock? **AS THOUGH**

_____ ?

8 Do you think that he is a good music journalist? And if you think he is a good music journalist, can you explain why? **SO**

_____ ?

9 British audiences rarely, if at all, give shows a standing ovation. **EVER**

_____ ?

10 There is little or no possibility at all that the series will run for a few more seasons. **ANY**

_____ ?