

Unit 3: If-clause, type I

What is an if-clause?

An if-clause tells us what can/could or will/would happen if a special situation sets in or a special actions takes place (dt. Bedingungssatz / Konditionalsatz).

| | |
|--|---|
| <p><i>If you go,</i> <i>If it rains,</i> <i>My grades can get better</i></p> | <p><i>I will go with you.</i> <i>the streets get wet.</i> <i>if I study hard.</i></p> |
|--|---|

What means 'type I'?

There are three (3) types of if-clauses in English. They tell us about situations or actions that

- **can / will come true (type I: erfüllbare oder realistische Bedingung)**
 → *My grades can get better if I study hard.*
 (ich will und werde lernen, so dass die Noten besser werden = wahrscheinlich und erfüllbar)

- **could / would come true (type II: unwahrscheinliche oder unrealistische Bedingung)**
 → *My grades could get better if I studied hard.*
 (wenn ich mich hinsetzen und lernen würde, könnten die Noten besser werden = eher unwahrscheinlich und unrealistisch)

- **could / would have come true in the past (type III: nicht mehr erfüllbare Bedingung)**
 → *My grades could have got better, if I had studied hard.*
 (wenn ich mich damals hingesezt und gelernt hätte, hätten die Noten besser werden können = jetzt ist es aber zu spät, also unerfüllbar)

In school year 6, you'll only learn type I (erfüllbare, wahrscheinliche Bedingungssätze / Konditionalsätze).

These sentences all have **two parts** – an if-clause and a main clause.
 There is **never a comma before the 'if'**.

| If-clause | Main clause |
|--|--|
| <i>If I get out of school earlier today,</i> | <i>I will go / can go / may go / go swimming.</i> |
| <i>If the teachers don't give us much homework,</i> | <i>we will play / can play / may play / play outside.</i> |
| <i>If it rains heavily today,</i> | <i>the streets get wet.</i> |
| → tenses in the if-clause | → tenses in the main clause |
| simple present | will / can / may + infinitive |
| | simple present |

You can also put the main clause **at the beginning** of a sentence:
ex. *The streets get wet if it rains.*

What is the difference between 'if' and 'when'?

The German translation for both is '**wenn**'. But there are two meanings of 'wenn':

- '**if**' = falls ... / im Falle, dass ... / wenn ... → **konditionale** Konjunktion

If our parents buy a new PC, we will be able to use the internet again.

(es ist noch nicht 100% sicher, ob sie es tun)

- '**wenn**' = dann, wenn ... / (immer) wenn ... → **temporale** Konjunktion

When our parents buy a new PC on Friday, we can use the internet on Saturday.

(es ist sicher, dass sie einen neuen PC kaufen, nur der Zeitpunkt ist noch unbestimmt)

The rules for the tenses are the same.

ATTENTION:

Don't use 'will' in the 'if' / 'when' – clause.

'If' and 'will', makes me ill!
'If' und 'will', das ist nicht richtig; doch im Hauptsatz ist 'will' wichtig!

Excercises

Now try to use the **if-clause type I** in the following exercises:

1) Choose the correct sentence parts from the box below. Use the correct verb tense.

- If you give me your address, _____
- I won't be able to play football tomorrow _____
- My brother will buy everybody an ice-cream _____
- If we take the next train, _____
- You'll gain weight _____
- If you give me some money, _____
- If my 'best' friend doesn't come to my party, _____
- If you don't finish school, _____

Box:

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <i>you ... sorry one day (be)</i> | - | <i>if my leg ... better (not be)</i> | - |
| <i>I ... her again (not invite)</i> | - | <i>I ... you a postcard (write)</i> | - |
| <i>if you ... eating so many sweets (not stop)</i> | - | <i>we ... in Nürnberg at twelve (arrive)</i> | - |
| <i>if he ... his exam (pass)</i> | - | <i>I ... the shopping (do)</i> | |

2) Translate into English (if-clauses type I).

- Wenn du jetzt nicht ins Bett gehst, bist du morgen müde.

- Ich helfe dir morgen, wenn du mir jetzt hilfst.

- Wenn es am Wochenende schön ist, machen wir eine Fahrradtour.

- Wenn es morgen regnet, gehen wir ins Kino.

'if' or 'when'

1. Fill in.

_____ I work hard enough, I'll know (know) the answers to all the questions.

_____ I see the questions, I'll read them carefully.

My answers will be better _____ I think about them first.

_____ I don't know an answer, I'll go on to the next question.

I'm sure I will have finished, _____ the bell rings.

_____ I get my test back, perhaps I'll have an "A".

My parents will be very happy _____ I get a good grade.

2. Fill in.

+ _____ Sheila got an invitation from her aunt in Boston, she was very excited.

+ She wrote: " _____ you don't miss your parents and your friends, I would suggest that you stay for four weeks."

+ " _____ you arrive, I will pick you up at the airport."

+ "Of course, you can call your parents immediately _____ we get to my place.

+ _____ Sheila's aunt didn't have internet access, Sheila's boyfriend couldn't send her any e-mails.

+ _____ Sheila is at the airport, she will have enough time for drinking a cup of coffee before the departure.

Solutions:

Unit 4: If-clauses, type I

1. Exercises

- ... *I will / can write you a postcard.*
- ... *if my leg is not better.*
- ... *if he passes his exam.*
- ... *we may / will arrive in Nuremberg at twelve.*
- ... *if you do not stop eating so many sweets.*
- ... *I will / can do the shopping.*
- ... *I won't invite her again.*
- ... *you will be sorry one day.*

Test 4

1)

- *If you don't go to bed now, you will be tired tomorrow.*
- *I will help you tomorrow, if you help me now.*
- *If the weather is fine at the weekend, we will go on / will do a bike tour.*
- *If it rains tomorrow, we will go to the cinema.*

2)

- A. *If – When – if – When – when – When – if*
- B. *When – If – When – when – If - When*