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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## 6 Minute Grammar

### Conditionals review



*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Callum**

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Grammar with me, Callum

**Finn**

And me, Finn

**Callum**

So Finn, what is our topic today?

**Finn**

I don't know.

**Callum**

Haven't you read the script?

**Finn**

No, when I \*\*\*\*\* to the studio, I read the script, not before.

**Callum**

If you had read the script, you \*\*\*\*\* know what it's about.

**Finn**

Well if you \*\*\*\*\* me a few minutes, I'll just give it a quick read.

**Callum**

I'd love to give you a few minutes if we had the time. But this is 6 Minute Grammar, not 16 Minute Grammar.

**Finn**

If I'd known you were going to be so bossy, I'd've stayed in \*\*\*\*\*.

**Callum**

Mmm. So what is today's topic? If you've been paying attention, you might \*\*\*\*\* worked it out.

**Finn**

We've had a lot of 'ifs', that is a bit of a clue.

**Callum**

It is indeed. Today we're reviewing conditionals.

**Finn**

Conditional sentences connect two things. One thing follows on from something else.

**Callum**

Conditional sentences generally have two parts, the **if clause**, which is sometimes called the **if clause**, and a **main clause**. The **if clause** states a condition and the **main clause** has what happens because of that condition.

**Finn**

And there are different kinds of conditional structures depending on whether we're dealing with something in the present or **if clause** and if we're talking about something real or **if clause**.

**Callum**

We normally talk about four different conditional structures. The first one is called the **if clause** conditional. Here's an example from earlier. Let's wind back a bit.

[sfx: tape rewinding]

**Finn**

When I come to the studio, I read the **if clause**.

**Callum**

Now Finn, what time does that refer to?

**Finn**

It's not really past, present or future, is it? It's timeless. It's **if clause**.

**Callum**

And this is what the zero conditional is for. Things that are **if clause** true, things that **if clause** happen. One thing happens, something else follows.

**Finn**

It's also commonly used for general truths and facts. Like in these examples.

**Feifei**

*When you heat water enough, it boils.*

*If you leave milk out long enough, it goes **if clause**.*

**Callum**

And in zero conditionals, **when** and **if** have the \*\*\*\*\* meaning. Let's move on now to the first conditional.

[sfx: tape rewinding]

**Finn**

Well if you give me a few minutes, I'll just give it a quick read.

**Callum**

Finn, what time does this refer to?

**Finn**

This one is about something that might happen in the \*\*\*\*\*. I'll read the script.

**Callum**

Will that definitely happen?

**Finn**

No, it'll only happen after a particular condition is met, and that condition is that you give me enough time.

**Callum**

With the first conditional, you can use **when** as well as **if** but unlike the zero conditional, they do have \*\*\*\*\* meanings. Listen to these examples.

**Feifei**

*If I go to the shops, I'll get some bread.*

*When I go to the shops, I'll get some bread.*

**Callum**

So Finn: "If I go to the shops". Am I definitely going to the shops?

**Finn**

No, not this time. It's a possibility, but not \*\*\*\*\*.

**Callum**

And what about: "When I go to the shops"?

**Finn**

In this one, using **when**, there is a definite plan to go to the shops.

**Callum**

So the first conditional expresses a likely result of a \*\*\*\*\* or definite future condition.

## **IDENT**

You're listening to BBC Learning English.

### **Callum**

Today we're reviewing different conditional forms.

### **Finn**

We've looked at zero and first conditionals, and it was Callum who gave us an example of the second conditional.

**[sfx: tape rewinding]**

### **Callum**

I'd love to give you a few minutes if we \*\*\*\*\* the time.

### **Finn**

What time does this refer to, Callum?

### **Callum**

It's an \*\*\*\*\* present time – do we have the time now? No we don't. It's making a prediction about something that could be possible if something in the present were different. We're imagining a different present reality.

### **Finn**

Wow. That's very sci-fi, Callum!

### **Callum**

And now the third conditional. Let's go back again and here the example.

**[sfx: tape rewinding]**

### **Finn**

If I'd known you were going to be so bossy, I'd've stayed in bed.

### **Callum**

Finn, what time are we talking about here?

### **Finn**

We're talking about the \*\*\*\*\*, but something that didn't happen in the past.

### **Callum**

Yes, you didn't know when you got up this morning that I was going to be so bossy.

**Finn**

No, my past action would have been different, if I had known. I would **\*\*\*\*\*** stayed in bed!

**Callum**

So with the third conditional were imagining a different past reality.

**Finn**

Very good. That's right. Very sci-fi again Callum.

**Callum**

Now, just time for a quick quiz. You're going to hear a sentence and you need to work out whether it's a zero, first, second or third conditional. Here's the first one:

**Finn**

If you drop the price, you'll sell more.

**Callum**

That's **\*\*\*\*\*** conditional. Here's the next one:

**Finn**

If I were you, I'd take the job.

**Callum**

And that one is **\*\*\*\*\*** conditional. What about this one?

**Finn**

When I've had a busy day, I want some peace and quiet when I get home.

**Callum**

Did you get it? That was the **\*\*\*\*\*** conditional.

**Finn**

Well done if you got all of those right.

**Callum**

If we **\*\*\*\*\*** more time we **\*\*\*\*\*** tell you a lot more about conditionals.

**Finn**

But we don't, so we're going to say goodbye for now, and remind you that there's more about this topic on our website **bbclearningenglish.com**. Do join us again soon for more 6 Minute Grammar.

**Both**

Bye.