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).

- If you go,
  I will go with you.
- If it rains,
  the streets get wet.
- My grades can get better if I study hard.

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 hingesetzt 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 / Konditionsätze).

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If-clause</th>
<th>Main clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If I get out of school earlier today,</td>
<td>I will go / can go / may go / go swimming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the teachers don’t give us much homework,</td>
<td>we will play / can play / may play / play outside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it rains heavily today,</td>
<td>the streets get wet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

→ tenses in the if-clause → tenses in the main clause

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>simple present</th>
<th>will / can / may + infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>simple present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You can also put the main clause **at the beginning** of a sentence:
ex. *The streets get wet if it rains.*

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**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.

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**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!*
Exercises

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:

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

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