

Conditionals

I. Consist of 2 clauses: *E.g. If you do this, you will be wise.*

- 1) the "CONDITION" (or "protasis" = Greek for *proposition* or *premise*) = "If you do this"
= a subordinate clause usually introduced by si, "if", or nisi, "if not" or "unless"; states a hypothetical action or circumstance.
- 2) the "CONCLUSION" (or "apodosis" = Greek for *outcome* or *result*) = "you will be wise"
= main clause; expresses anticipated outcome if the premise turns out to be true.

II. Come in 6 flavors. Determining what type of conditional you have (and therefore how to translate it) is as easy as determining the tense and mood of the two clauses.

Tense & Mood of Clauses		Latin Example	English Example	Type
Condition	Conclusion			
Present Indicative	Present Indicative	<i>Si id facit, sapiens est</i>	If she does it, she is wise.	Simple Fact Present
Past Indicative	Past Indicative	<i>Si id fecit, sapiens fuit.</i>	If she did it, she was wise.	Simple Fact Past
Future Indicative (future or future perfect)	Future Indicative (future or future perfect)	<i>Si id faciet, sapiens erit.</i>	If she <u>does</u> it, she will be wise.	Simple Fact Future or Future More Vivid
Imperfect Subjunctive	Imperfect Subjunctive	<i>Si id faceret, sapiens esset.</i>	If she <u>were</u> doing it, she <u>would</u> be wise.	Contrary to Fact Present
Pluperfect Subjunctive	Pluperfect Subjunctive	<i>Si id facisset, sapiens fuisset.</i>	If she <u>had</u> done it, she <u>would have</u> been wise.	Contrary to Fact Past
Present Subjunctive	Present Subjunctive	<i>Si id faciat, sapiens sit.</i>	If she <u>should</u> do it, she <u>would</u> be wise.	Future Less Vivid

III. How to Handle Conditionals

1. Find the Condition (aka the Protasis); almost always indicated by si or nisi
2. Determine whether the mood is indicative or subjunctive.
 - a. If the mood is indicative, you have a simple condition (just like this sentence).
 - b. If the mood is subjunctive, find the tense
 - i. If tense = imperfect → contrary to fact present (*were...would*)
 - ii. If tense = pluperfect → contrary to fact past (*had ... would have*).
 - iii. If tense = present → future less vivid (*should... would*)

N.B.: Indicative Conditionals will present you with no difficulty as the English version almost always a literal translation from the Latin. The only minor exception is the Simple Fact Future: What is unusual about the ENGLISH usage? Where have you seen this type of flexibility with tenses before?

Subjunctive Conditionals will require more careful attention because, as is always the case with subjunctives, the usage determines the translation. Memorize the table above and the generic translations for the 3 types of subjunctive conditionals.

N.B.: You will encounter "mixed conditionals," which have different moods or tenses in the protasis and apodosis. This should not cause concern. Simply translate each clause as indicated above. *E.g. Si id faciat, sapiens erit.* = "If he should do it, he will be wise" ← the future indicative in the apodosis makes the statement more certain than if the present subjunctive had been employed.