

English Conditionals Explained: A Study Guide, by Susan Mazur

Examples of each type of Conditional:

Take a look at how the Verbs change form in each one.

Zero (A rule or something that never changes):

- If it is sunny, the kids usually go out to play.
- If I have some free time, I usually read a book.
- If she has the chance, she takes a nap.
- If they sleep in on the weekend, they feel lazy.
- If a person doesn't eat or sleep, they eventually die.

First (A real possibility in the future):

- If it is sunny tomorrow, the kids will go out to play.
- If I have some free time, today, I will read a book.
- If she has some free time later, she will take a nap.
- If they sleep in this Saturday, they will feel lazy.
- If you don't eat or sleep, you will eventually die.

Second (An unreal or imagined situation about the present; something that cannot be changed):

- If it were sunny today, the kids would go out to play.
- If I had some free time today, I would read a book. If I had more free time, I would read more.
- If she had more free time, she would take a nap / she would take more naps.
- If you gave me a sandwich or anything to eat, I'd eat it right now. I'm so hungry!

Third (An unreal or imagined situation about the past; something that cannot be changed):

- If it had been sunny yesterday, the kids would have gone out to play.
- If I had had some free time yesterday, I would have read a book.
- If she had had more free time yesterday, she would have taken a nap.
- If they had slept in last Saturday, they would have felt lazy.
- If I hadn't eaten that sandwich, I think I would have fainted from hunger! I hadn't eaten anything for twenty-four hours before that!