

# Si Clauses

## French “If...-then” Clauses

Many students of French have a hard time with **si clauses** (also known as conditionals or conditional sentences), but they are really quite simple. Study the lessons on each of the main types and then take the quiz.

There are three main types of **si clauses**:

1. First conditional: Likely situations (present + present, future, or imperative)
2. Second conditional: Unlikely situations (imperfect + conditional)
3. Third conditional: Impossible situations (pluperfect + conditional perfect)

The first verb tense listed is the one that follows **si** (if), while the second tense is the *result clause* - the event that is dependent on the first. In English, the "result clause" is often preceded by "then."

Examples from your homework:

1. Si je ne **dois** pas travailler dimanche j'**irai** à Londres.
2. Si je **gagnais** beaucoup d'argent je **ferais** un tour du monde.
3. S'il n'**avait** pas **plu**, j'**aurais joué** au tennis

# First conditional: Likely situations (present + present, future, or imperative)

## Present - Present

This construction is used for things that happen regularly. Note that the *si* in these sentences could probably be replaced by *quand* (when) with little or no difference in meaning.

S'il **pleut**, nous ne **sortons** pas - If it rains, we don't go out.

Nous ne **sortons** pas s'il **pleut** - We don't go out if it rains.

Si je ne **veux** pas lire je **regarde** la télé - If I don't want to read I watch TV.

Je **regarde** la télé si je ne **veux** pas lire - I watch TV if I don't want to read.

## Present - Future

The **present** - **future** construction is used for events that are likely to occur. The present follows *si*; it is the situation that is required before the other action can take place.

Si j'**ai** le temps, je le **ferai** - If I have time, I will do it.  
Je le **ferai** si j'**ai** le temps - I will do it if I have time.

Si tu **étudies**, tu **seras** intelligent - If you study, you will be smart.

Tu **seras** intelligent si tu **étudies** - You will be smart if you study.

## Present - Imperative

This construction is used to give an order that is dependent on something. The present follows *si*; it is the situation that is required before the other action becomes a command.

Si tu **peux**, **viens** me voir - If you can, come see me.  
**Viens** me voir si tu **peux** - Come see me if you can.  
(If you can't, then don't worry about it.)

Si vous **avez** de l'argent, **payez** la facture - If you have money, pay the bill.

**Payez** la facture si vous **avez** de l'argent - Pay the bill if you have money.  
(If you don't have money, someone else will take care of it.)

## Second conditional: Unlikely Situations

The **imperfect** - **conditional** construction is used to express something that is contrary to present fact or unlikely to occur (the second conditional). The imperfect follows *si*; it is the condition that must be met before the conditional action can take place.

Si j'**avais** le temps, je le **ferais** - If I had time, I would do it.

Je le **ferais** si j'**avais** le temps - I would do it if I had time.

Si tu **étudiais**, tu **serais** intelligent - If you studied, you would be smart.

Tu **serais** intelligent si tu **étudiais** - You would be smart if you studied.

## QUESTIONS

1. If I were rich, I would buy a house.
2. If you're not tired, tell me a story.
3. If she gives you some money, will you buy a car?
4. I will go to the market if you do the dishes.
5. If he's happy, he laughs all day.
6. Your brothers would cry if you fell.
7. If you have the camera, take a picture.
8. Will we survive if you lose your job?
9. If I pass the test, we'll celebrate.
10. I can't sleep if it's hot.
11. If you're hungry, eat something.
12. He'll be happy if he gets married.



## Answers

1. Si j'étais riche, j'achèterais une maison.
2. Si tu n'es pas fatigué, raconte-moi une histoire.
3. Si elle te donne de l'argent, achèteras-tu une voiture ?
4. J'irai au marché si tu fais la vaisselle.
5. S'il est heureux, il rit pendant toute la journée.
6. Tes frères pleureraient si tu tombais.
7. Si tu as (vous avez) l'appareil-photo, prends (prenez) une photo.
8. Est-ce que nous survivrons si tu perds ton emploi ?
9. Si je réussis à l'examen, nous célébrerons.
10. Je ne peux pas dormir s'il fait chaud.
11. Si tu as (vous avez) faim, mange (mangez) quelque chose.
12. Il sera content/heureux s'il se marie.