

29th January

OET Language – Conditionals: Alternatives to 'if':

What is the difference between the meaning of these four sentences?

- If it rains, I'll play football – I will play football in this situation - “when it rains”
- Unless it rains, I'll play football – I will play football except in this situation – “I will play football if it does not rain” – unless = if not
- Even if it rains, I'll play football – It doesn't matter if this situation happens, I will still play football
- Only if it rains, I'll play football – I will play football only in this situation

What is the difference between these sentences?

- You can pay in cash **if** you have the exact change
 - You can pay in cash **as long as** you have the exact change
 - You can pay in cash **provided** you have the exact change
 - You can pay in cash **providing** you have the exact change
 - You can pay in cash **on condition that** you have the exact change
- least
↓
most

These sentences are all 'conditions' – we have to follow the rules or obligations in this situation.

The sentences all have the same meaning, but they start with the least formal and end with the most formal sentence.

We can also use a structure similar to the first conditional in something called 'future time clauses':

- Please call me when you **get** home
- As soon as I **arrive**, I will go to bed
- I will be working until I **finish** the report
- After she **completes** the homework, she will go to the gym / After completing the homework, she will go to the gym
- He can have some breakfast before he **leaves** the house / He can have some breakfast before leaving the house

Practice:

Finish these sentences with your own ideas and using correct grammar:

1. If you experience severe side effects, **you should seek medical attention.**
2. Patients should complete the entire course of antibiotics even if **they feel better.**
3. Provided you follow the prescribed physical therapy regimen, **you will recover soon.**
4. You can resume your regular activities when **you feel better/healthier.**
5. Unless the symptoms improve within 48 hours, **her disease will be considered a chronic condition. / ...you will need to stay in hospital.**
6. Your cholesterol levels are likely to stabilise on condition that **you are compliant with the medication.**
7. As soon as the test results are available, **we can discuss your treatment plan.**
8. Ensure you have eaten a light meal before **starting exercise / ...you start exercise.**
9. As long as the patient adheres to the treatment plan, **her recovery will be better.**
10. It is advisable to stay hydrated and rest until **the procedure is done/finished.**