

Grammar Conditionals

When do we Use 'Unless' and 'If not'? 1

The conjunction **unless** means **if not**, for example:

I will talk to you on Monday **unless** *my meeting runs late.*
I will talk to you on Monday **if** *my meeting **doesn't run** late.*

1. The **unless** clause becomes the 'if' clause; the tense remains the same
2. If positive, the main verb becomes negative; if negative, it becomes positive
3. The result clause remains the same; note: 'if' can be replaced by 'as long as'

Unless can be in first or mid-position in a sentence, and the clauses can be reversed. It often represents the idea:
UNLESS STH POSITIVE HAPPENS (+) > STH NEGATIVE WILL HAPPEN (-)

We can use **unless** to:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| A. threaten / warn | Unless you lose weight, you risk developing diabetes. |
| B. justify | I can't work any harder, unless I work 24 hours a day! |
| C. advise | Unless you enjoy being penniless, you should get a job. |
| D. change your mind | I'll wear the blue jumper, unless this looks better? |
| E. add a last-minute thought | Clint and Danni aren't coming – unless they find a babysitter. |

Write each sentence as a conditional sentence; say which of the five groups it matches and which conditional it is:

1. Unless the team are willing to get back together, it looks like our business is finished.
2. Unless the radiator had been bled, the heat wouldn't have spread evenly.
3. You can forget about that pay rise, unless the report is on my desk tomorrow morning.
4. You can join us for dinner next Tuesday – unless you are going to be unavailable.
5. I couldn't be here on time, unless I took a taxi.
6. You can still retake your exams, unless you've had enough of them.
7. I hate vegetables so I don't eat them, unless I absolutely have to.
8. Unless you wash the dishes, I'll stop your pocket money.
9. Their wedding should be a really lovely day – unless something unexpected happens.
10. Unless I had received that email by 8pm, I wouldn't have been able to finish my work that night.
11. The car stereo doesn't work unless you have the key.
12. I'll iron these shirts for you, unless you want to do it.
13. James could get that job, unless for some reason he decided against it.
14. Unless you add your debit card, you won't be able to order online.
15. Unless you wore protective clothing, you could be injured.
16. I'm sure United will win the match, unless the other side play Morgan.
17. They're going to drive to the beach, unless there's something good on telly.
18. We won't get to grandma's on time – unless the traffic clears.
19. She doesn't want to talk to you unless you apologise.
20. The screws won't come out unless you use a special tool.