

Grammar – Conditionals

When do we Use 'Unless' and 'If not'? 2

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. |

Match two clauses to make a sentence, then say which of the five groups it belongs to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. If you don't really need to buy a new coat today, ____ | a) You'll feel tired in the morning, |
| 2. Unless my wife agrees, ____ | b) the sauce won't taste right. |
| 3. ____ if you don't do any prep. | c) I won't get that tax refund |
| 4. ____ unless you get your beauty sleep. | d) we won't be able to go to the concert. |
| 5. Unless you're going to email her, ____ | e) I won't be able to join the cricket club. |
| 6. ____ if you don't start to appreciate me more! | f) You're going to fail the test |
| 7. Unless I'd eaten them, ____ | g) we wouldn't have met her at Easter. |
| 8. Unless the venue reduces the prices, ____ | h) you should buy a card for Auntie Jen. |
| 9. ____ unless the film has already begun. | i) I would tell the teacher! |
| 10. ____ if I hadn't! (J) | j) It wouldn't be viable to meet after work, |
| 11. ____ unless the government changes the rules. | k) I won't continue the lessons with him |
| 12. ____ unless you give them special food. | l) it's worth waiting for the sale. |
| 13. ____ if they don't begin to improve. | m) the yoghurts would've gone off. |
| 14. Unless you use chopped tomatoes ____ | n) The birds won't come to the garden |
| 15. If we can't persuade the neighbours to be quieter, ____ | o) Nobody woulda used the Xbox, |
| 16. ____ unless the weather takes a turn for the worse. | p) We can have a lovely walk, |
| 17. If your sister hadn't changed her ways, ____ | q) I'm leaving you, Malcolm, |
| 18. If you didn't give me my book back, ____ | r) We can go to the pub, |
| 19. ____ unless I left early – and I can't. | s) Let's go to the cinema, |
| 20. ____ if you don't want to order a takeaway? | t) we will have to move house. |

Grammar – Conditionals

When do we Use 'Unless' and 'If not'? 2

Answers:

- | | | | | | | | |
|-------|---|--------|---|--------|---|--------|---|
| 1. l) | C | 6. q) | A | 11. c) | D | 16. p | E |
| 2. e) | B | 7. m) | B | 12. n) | C | 17. g) | B |
| 3. f) | A | 8. d) | E | 13. k) | D | 18. i) | A |
| 4. a) | C | 9. s) | E | 14. b) | C | 19. j) | B |
| 5. h) | C | 10. o) | B | 15. t) | A | 20. r) | E |

Extra time:

Once they have the twenty sentences, students could transform each one into either a sentence with 'unless' or a conditional sentence with 'if' – and say which conditional it is. Answers:

1. If you don't really (Unless you really) need to buy a new coat today, it's worth waiting for the sale.
2. Unless my wife agrees (If my wife doesn't agree), I won't be able to join the cricket club. (1st)
3. You're going to fail the test if you don't do any (unless you do some) prep.
4. You'll feel tired in the morning, unless you (if you don't) get your beauty sleep. (1st)
5. Unless you're (If you're not) going to email her, you should buy a card for Auntie Jen. (1st)
6. I'm leaving you, Malcolm, if you don't (unless you) start to appreciate me more!
7. Unless I'd (If I hadn't) eaten them, the yoghurts would've gone off. (3rd)
8. Unless the venue reduces (If the venue doesn't reduce) the prices, we won't be able to go to the concert. (1st)
9. Let's go to the cinema, unless the film has (if the film hasn't) already begun. (1st)
10. Nobody woulda used the Xbox, if I hadn't (unless I had)!
11. I won't get that tax refund unless the government changes (if the government doesn't change) the rules. (1st)
12. The birds won't come to the garden unless you (if you don't) give them special food. (1st)
13. I won't continue the lessons with him if they don't (unless they) begin to improve.
14. Unless you (If you don't) use chopped tomatoes the sauce won't taste right. (1st)
15. If we can't (Unless we can) persuade the neighbours to be quieter, we will have to move house.
16. We can have a lovely walk, unless the weather takes (if the weather doesn't take) a turn for the worse. (1st)
17. If your sister hadn't (Unless your sister had) changed her ways, we wouldn't have met her at Easter.
18. If you didn't give (Unless you gave) me my book back, I would tell the teacher!
19. It wouldn't be viable to meet after work, unless I left (if I didn't leave) early – and I can't. (2nd)
20. We can go to the pub, if you don't (unless you) want to order a takeaway?