



First Conditional



What is the first conditional?

To indicate that something may happen in the present or future. It has a two clause structure. This includes an “**if**” clause and the main clause.

A comma usually separates the two clauses if the “**if**” clause precedes the main clause.

Examples:

- **If** Anita wins the reading competition, she will win a cash prize.
- **If** Mrs Xing wants me to read the novel, I will do it.

If the main clause appears first, drop the comma.

Examples:

- Anita will win a cash prize **if** she wins the reading competition.
- I will read the novel **if** Mrs Xing wants me to.

Structure : if + simple present/simple future
(Subject + will/won't + verb)

Examples:

- **If** Lola reads the story again, I **will fall** asleep.
- **If** the book is in the library, I **will check** it out.
- **If** Guan enters the competition, he **will** definitely **win**.
- **If** they participate in the play, Mr Maniam **will be** very happy.

Modal Verbs

May (not)/might (not)/could

We use **may**:

1) when we are not sure about something in the present or future.

Example:

- Umar **may** be the narrator for the play.
(*Perhaps Umar will be the narrator for the play.*)

2) to ask for permission in a formal way.

Example:

- **May** I borrow your storybook, Aisya?

3) to give permission in a formal way.

Example:

- You **may** borrow my storybook.

4) to say that someone has permission in a formal way.

Example:

- The pupils **may** enter the hall now.

We can use “**may not**” to decline permission or to say that someone does not have permission, in a formal way.

Example:

- You **may not** check out the book.

We use “**might**” when we are unsure about something in the present or future.

Example:

- I **might** buy the book at the book fair.

We can use “**could**” to talk about abilities in the past.

Example:

- Rubi **could** read Arabic when she was six.

How to use the infinitive without “**to**” after “**could**” and “**couldn't**”.

Examples:

- We **could** read when we were five.
- We **couldn't** read when we were five.

Change the order of “**could**” and the subject for question form.

Example:

- **Could** he be a librarian?
Yes, he **could**.