

Lesson Plan: First vs. second conditional

Level: Intermediate (B1–B1+)

Time: 60 minutes

Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Distinguish between the **first conditional** (real/possible future) and **second conditional** (unreal/improbable or imaginary situations)
- Accurately form sentences using both conditionals in speaking and writing

Target Language

First Conditional (Real / Possible)

Form:

If / When + present simple, will + base verb

Examples:

If it rains, I will stay at home.

If I finish my homework, I'll watch a movie.

Use:

Real, possible future situations

Second Conditional (Unreal / Imaginary)

Form:

If + past simple, would + base verb

Examples:

If I won the lottery, I would travel the world.

If I were taller, I would play basketball.

Use:

- Unreal, unlikely, or imaginary situations
- Advice (If I were you...)

Materials

- Whiteboard or slides
- Handout or worksheet (optional)
- Situation cards (optional)

Lesson Procedure

1. Warm-up (5–8 minutes)

Activity: Prediction & Imagination

Write two sentences on the board:

- If it rains tomorrow, I will stay at home.
- If I won a million dollars, I would buy a house.

Ask students:

- Are both situations possible?
- Which one is more realistic?

→ Elicit that one is **realistic**, one is **imaginary**.

2. Presentation (10 minutes)

Step 1: Meaning

Draw a simple timeline or chart:

Conditional	Time	Reality
First	Future	Possible
Second	Present/Future	Unreal / imaginary

Use concept-check questions (CCQs):

- Can I really win the lottery? (No)
- Is rain tomorrow possible? (Yes)

Step 2: Form

Highlight verb forms using color or underlining:

- If it **rains**, I **will stay** home.
- If I **won**, I **would travel**.

Point out:

- Past simple ≠ past meaning (second conditional)
- "If I were..." is common and correct

3. Controlled practice (10–12 minutes)

Activity: Choose the correct conditional

Students complete sentences:

1. If I ____ (see) her today, I ____ (tell) her the news.
2. If I ____ (be) rich, I ____ (buy) a sports car.
3. If it ____ (snow) tonight, we ____ (cancel) school.

Check answers together and ask *why* each conditional is used.

4. Semi-controlled practice (10 minutes)

Activity: Finish the sentence

Give students sentence starters:

- If I don't study tonight, ...
- If I lived in another country, ...
- If my teacher gives us homework, ...
- If I were the president, ...

Students work in pairs and share answers.

5. Communicative practice (10–15 minutes)

Activity: What would you do?

Students discuss in pairs or small groups:

- If you found a wallet on the street, what would you do?
- If you could change one rule at school, what would you change?
- If it rains this weekend, what will you do?

Encourage follow-up questions.

6. Error correction & feedback (5 minutes)

- Write common mistakes on the board anonymously
- Elicit corrections from students
- Reinforce meaning over form

Common errors to watch for

- ✗ If I will see her, I will tell her
- ✓ If I see her, I will tell her
- ✗ If I would be rich, I would travel
- ✓ If I were rich, I would travel

Optional homework

- Write 5 sentences using the first conditional
- Write 5 sentences using the second conditional
- Or: Write a short paragraph: "If I won \$10,000..."