

Si (if) clauses

To describe:	Si clause	Main or result clause	Example
A possibility (concerning a future event)	present	future imperative	Si j'étudie, je réussirai à mon examen. Si tu as un rhume, prends des vitamines !
A situation contrary to reality	imperfect	conditional	Si j'étudiais, je réussirais à mon examen.

To express future possibilities, or what will happen *if* a certain condition is met, use two clauses:

- a **si** clause (*if* clause), which states the condition – in the present tense.
- a main clause (result clause), which expresses the possible outcome – in the future tense.

Claire ira au Portugal si elle a assez d'argent.
S'il a le temps, Pierre nous rendra visite.

To express what would happen *if* a certain condition were met, use two clauses:

- a **si** (*if*) clause which expresses a situation contrary to fact or reality or a condition not yet met – in the imperfect tense.
- a main clause (result) which expresses what the outcome would be – in the conditional tense.

The conditional is always used in the main clause, never in the **si** clause.

Tu ne serais pas toujours fatigué si tu dormais davantage.
Si nous avons le temps, nous jouerions au tennis.

The **si** clause may come before or after the main clause, depending on the emphasis it receives. It is placed at the end of the sentence for emphasis.

Si becomes **s'** only before *il* and *ils*. It remains **si** before *elle*, *elles*, *on*, or with a word beginning with a vowel sound.