



Conditional Comparison: Zero, First & Second Conditional Comparison: Real or Imaginary?

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- If you mix red and blue, you ____ purple.
a) get
b) will get
c) would get
d) got
- If she studies hard, she ____ the exam.
a) passed
b) passes
c) would pass
d) will pass
- If I ____ rich, I would travel the world.
a) am
b) were
c) will be
d) have been
- Water ____ if you cool it below 0°C.
a) would freeze
b) will freeze
c) freezes
d) froze
- If we leave now, we ____ the train.
a) would catch
b) caught
c) will catch
d) catch
- If I ____ you, I would apologise.
a) am
b) will be
c) have been
d) were
- If you ____ too much sugar, you gain weight.
a) eat
b) will eat
c) ate
d) would eat
- If Tom ____ the interview, he'll get the job.
a) would pass
b) passes
c) passed
d) pass
- If I had more free time, I ____ a new hobby.
a) will start
b) start
c) would start
d) started
- Plants die if they ____ enough sunlight.
a) won't get
b) wouldn't get
c) didn't get
d) don't get

11. If it ___ tomorrow, the match will be cancelled.
a) rained
b) rains
c) would rain
d) rain
12. If I won the lottery, I ___ my job.
a) would quit
b) will quit
c) quit
d) quitted
13. Every time you press this button, the machine ____.
a) would start
b) started
c) starts
d) will start
14. If I see Laura, I ___ her about the party.
a) told
b) tell
c) would tell
d) will tell
15. If I ___ speak French, I would move to Paris.
a) could
b) can
c) will
d) would
16. Ice melts if the temperature ___ above 0°C.
a) would rise
b) rises
c) will rise
d) rose
17. If we ___ a bigger car, we could take everyone.
a) will have
b) have
c) had
d) would have
18. If you don't hurry, you ___ late for school.
a) will be
b) would be
c) are
d) were
19. If she ___ the bus, she'll have to walk.
a) would miss
b) missed
c) miss
d) misses
20. If I ___ taller, I would play basketball.
a) am
b) were
c) will be
d) would be



Answers

1. a) get
2. d) will pass
3. b) were
4. c) freezes
5. c) will catch
6. d) were
7. a) eat
8. b) passes
9. c) would start
10. d) don't get
11. b) rains
12. a) would quit
13. c) starts
14. d) will tell
15. a) could
16. b) rises
17. c) had
18. a) will be
19. d) misses
20. b) were



Explanations

1. “get” (a)

This is a zero conditional describing a general truth — mixing red and blue always produces purple. Zero conditional uses 'If + present simple, present simple'. 'Will get' (first conditional) would suggest a specific future prediction, not a permanent fact.

2. “will pass” (d)

This is a first conditional about a real future possibility. She hasn't taken the exam yet, and studying hard makes passing likely. First conditional: 'If + present simple, will + base verb'. 'Passes' (zero conditional) would mean she always passes when she studies, but this is about a specific upcoming exam.

3. “were” (b)

The result clause 'would travel' tells us this is a second conditional — an imaginary situation. The speaker is NOT rich. Second conditional uses 'If + past simple, would + base verb'. 'Were' is the standard subjunctive form used in second conditional for all persons (If I were, If he were).

4. “freezes” (c)

This is a scientific fact — water always freezes below 0°C. Zero conditional uses present simple in both clauses: 'Water freezes if you cool it...' 'Will freeze' would suggest this is a one-time prediction, but this is a permanent physical law.

5. “will catch” (c)

This is a first conditional about a real, specific situation — leaving now to catch a particular train. 'Will catch' shows a likely future result. 'Catch' (zero conditional) would imply this always happens, but we're talking about one specific train journey.

6. “were” (d)

This is the classic second conditional advice structure: 'If I were you, I would...' The speaker is giving advice about an imaginary situation — they are NOT the other person. 'Were' is the subjunctive form used in second conditional, standard for all persons.

7. “eat” (a)

This is a zero conditional expressing a general health truth — eating too much sugar always leads to weight gain. Both clauses use present simple: 'If you eat... you gain...' 'Ate' (past simple) would make it a second conditional, but the result clause 'gain' (present simple) confirms it's zero conditional.

8. “passes” (b)

The contracted 'he'll' (he will) in the result clause tells us this is a first conditional — a real future possibility. First conditional uses present simple in the if-clause: 'passes' (third person singular with -es). 'Passed' (past simple) would create a second conditional, but 'will get' in the result confirms first conditional.

9. “would start” (c)

The if-clause 'had' (past simple) signals a second conditional — an imaginary situation. The speaker doesn't have much free time. The result clause needs 'would + base verb': 'would start'. 'Will start' (first conditional) would mean having free time is a real possibility.

10. “don't get” (d)

This is a zero conditional about a biological fact — plants always die without enough sunlight. Zero conditional uses present simple in both clauses, including negatives: 'don't get'. 'Won't get' would make it first conditional (specific prediction), but this is a general truth.

11. “rains” (b)

The result clause 'will be cancelled' tells us this is a first conditional — a real possibility about tomorrow's weather. First conditional: 'If + present simple (rains), will + base verb'. 'Rained' (past simple) would create a second conditional, but 'will' in the result confirms first.

12. “would quit” (a)

The if-clause 'won' (past simple) signals a second conditional — winning the lottery is imaginary and unlikely. The result needs 'would + base verb': 'would quit'. 'Will quit' (first conditional) would suggest winning the lottery is a real expectation.

13. “starts” (c)

This is a zero conditional used for instructions — pressing the button always starts the machine. 'Every time' reinforces that this is a general rule, not a one-time prediction. Zero conditional: 'Every time / If + present simple, present simple'. Zero conditional is commonly used for instructions and describing how machines work.

14. “will tell” (d)

This is a first conditional — the speaker might see Laura (a real possibility) and plans to tell her about the party. 'Will tell' (first conditional) shows a real intention. 'Would tell' (second conditional) would imply seeing Laura is unlikely or imaginary.

15. “could” (a)

The result clause 'would move' tells us this is a second conditional — the speaker cannot speak French and imagines what they'd do if they could. 'Could' is the past/subjunctive form of 'can', used in the if-clause of second conditionals. 'Can' (present) would make it a first conditional (real possibility).

16. “rises” (b)

This is a zero conditional about a scientific fact — ice always melts above 0°C. Both clauses use present simple: 'Ice melts if the temperature rises.' 'Will rise' would suggest a specific weather prediction, but this is a permanent physical law.

17. “had” (c)

The result clause 'could take' (could = past form of can) tells us this is a second conditional — they don't have a bigger car, so this is imaginary. Second conditional: 'If + past simple (had), could/would + base verb'. 'Have' (present) would make it zero or first conditional.

18. “will be” (a)

This is a first conditional used as a real warning about a specific situation. The speaker believes being late is a real possibility if the person doesn't hurry. 'Will be' (first conditional) shows a likely consequence. 'Would be' (second conditional) would suggest the situation is imaginary.

19. “misses” (d)

The contracted 'she'll' (she will) in the result clause confirms this is a first conditional. The if-clause needs present simple: 'misses' (third person singular with -es). 'Missed' (past simple) would make it second conditional, but 'will' in the result tells us this is a real possibility.

20. “were” (b)

The result clause 'would play' signals a second conditional — the speaker is NOT tall enough and imagines a different reality. 'Were' is the subjunctive form used in second conditional if-clauses: 'If I were taller...' This describes an imaginary present state, not a real possibility.