CONDITIONALS

What are the conditionals in English? They are sentences in two parts. An `if and a main clause`. If the 'if' clause comes first, a comma is used; if the main clause comes first, there is no need for a comma. We use them to describe the result of something that might happen (in the present or future) or might have happened but didn't (in the past). We create them with different English verb tenses. While they can be complicated to understand, they are very useful. Once you know how to build them they can be easy to use as the structure never changes.

1. **Zero Conditional:** general truths – things which always happen under certain conditions, scientific facts, etc. **Structure:** SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE IN BOTH CLAUSES *If you heat water to 100 degrees, it boils.*	2. **First Conditional**: possibilities in the present / future. Things which may happen. **Structure:** IF CLAUSE = SIMPLE PRESENT MAIN = WILL + INFINITIVE FORM OF THE VERB *If it's sunny, we'll go to the park.*
3. **Second Conditional:** unreal situations in the present or in the future. Things which don't or won't happen. **Structure**: IF CLAUSE = SIMPLE PAST* MAIN = WOULD(OR SHOULD,COULD, MIGHT) + INFINITIVE FORM OF THE VERB *If I won the lottery, I'd buy a big house.* *If you use the verb to be, always use "were" not "~~was~~" regardless of the subject.*	4. **Third Conditional:** unreal situations in the past or to express regret, something you wish hadn't happened or you hadn't done. Often used to talk about the opposite of what actually happened. **Structure:** IF CLAUSE = PAST PERFECT MAIN = WOULD (OR SHOULD, COULD, MIGHT) HAVE + PAST PARTICIPLE *If I hadn't drunk that extra beer, I wouldn't have been over the limit.*

5. **Mixed Conditionals**: they aren't like regular conditionals. They generally use a combination of the past, present, and future (2nd & 3rd conditionals)! For example, a past action with a present result:
   If he'd gone to university, he might have a better job. = He didn't go to university. (past) He doesn't have a very good job. (present)

You can also have things like a future action with past result. This can be a bit complicated, but it is useful too:
   If I weren't going to that interview for the job in New York, I would have gone out last night.