

UNIT 9 When and If sentences (When I do ... / If I do ...)

a) Study this example:

A: What time will you phone me tonight?
 B: I'll phone you **when** I get home from work.

'I'll phone you when I get home from work' is a sentence with two parts: 'I'll phone you' (the main part) and 'when I get home from work' (the **when** part). The sentence is future (*tonight*) but you cannot use **will** or **going to** in the **when** part of the sentence. Instead we use a present tense, usually present simple (I do).

- I'll send you a postcard **when** I'm on holiday. (*not* 'when I will be')
- **When** the rain stops, we'll go out. (*not* 'when the rain will stop')

The same thing happens after:

while **after** **before** **until/till** **as soon as**

- Can you look after the children **while** I am out? (*not* 'will be')
- **Before** you leave, you must visit the museum. (*not* 'will leave')
- Wait **until** I come back. (*not* 'will come')

b) You can also use the present perfect (I have done) after **when/after/until** etc. to show that the first action will be finished before the second:

- **When** I've read this book, you can have it.
- Don't say anything while Tom is here. Wait here **until** he has gone.

It is often possible to use present simple or present perfect:

- I'll come as soon as I finish. *or* I'll come as soon as I've finished.
- You'll feel better after you have *or* You'll feel better after you've had something to eat.

c) After if we also use the present simple (I do) for the future:

- It's raining. We'll get wet if we go out. (*not* 'if we will go')
- Hurry up! If we don't hurry, we'll be late. (*not* 'if we won't hurry')

Be careful not to confuse **when** and **if**.

Use **when** for things which are *sure* to happen:

- I'm going shopping this afternoon. **When** I go shopping, I'll buy some food.

Use **if** (not **when**) for things which will *possibly* happen:

- I *might* go shopping this afternoon. **If** I go shopping, I'll buy some food.
- **If** it rains this evening, I won't go out. (*not* 'when it rains')
- Don't worry **if** I'm late tonight. (*not* 'when I'm late')
- **If** he doesn't come soon, I'm not going to wait. (*not* 'when he doesn't come')

UNIT 9 Exercises

9.1 All the sentences in this exercise are about the future. Put the verbs into the correct form: **will/won't** or the present simple (I do).

Example: When I see (see) Tom tomorrow, I 'll invite (invite) him to our party.

- 1 Before you (leave), don't forget to shut the windows.
- 2 I (phone) you as soon as I (arrive) in London.
- 3 Please don't touch anything before the police (come).
- 4 Everyone (be) very surprised if he (pass) the examination.
- 5 When you (see) Brian again, you (not / recognise) him.
- 6 We (not/start) dinner until Jack (arrive).
- 7 (you/be) lonely without me while I (be) away?
- 8 If I (need) any help, I (ask) you.
- 9 Come on! Hurry up! Ann (be) annoyed if we (be) late.

9.2 This time you have to make one sentence from two sentences.

Example: You are going to leave soon. You must visit the museum before that.

You must visit the museum before you leave.

- 1 I'll find somewhere to live. Then I'll give you my address.
 I when
- 2 It's going to start raining. Let's go out before that.
 Let's before
- 3 I'm going to do the shopping. Then I'll come straight back home.
 after
- 4 You'll be in London next month. You must come and see me then.
 when
- 5 I'm going to finish reading this book. Then I'll get the dinner ready.
 when
- 6 We'll make our decision. Then we'll let you know.
 as soon as

9.3 In this exercise you have to put in **when** or **if**.

Example: If it rains this evening, I won't go out.

- 1 I'm going to Paris next week. I'm there, I hope to visit a friend of mine.
- 2 Tom might phone this evening. he does, can you take a message?
- 3 I think he'll get the job. I'll be very surprised he doesn't get it.
- 4 I hope to be there by 10.30. But I'm not there, don't wait for me.
- 5 I'm going shopping. you want anything, I can get it for you.
- 6 I think I'll go home now. I'm feeling very tired. I think I'll go straight to bed I get home.
- 7 I'm going away for a few days. I'll phone you I get back.
- 8 I want you to come to the party but you don't want to come, you needn't.

UNIT 116

By and until By the time ...

- a) **By (+ a time)** = not later than:
- I posted the letter today, so they should receive it **by Monday**. (= *on or before Monday, on Monday at the latest*)
 - We'd better hurry. We have to be at home **by 5 o'clock**. (= at or before 5 o'clock, at 5 o'clock at the latest)
 - Where's Ann? She should be here **by now**. (= now or before now; so she should have already arrived)

You cannot use **until** with this meaning:

- Tell me **by Friday** whether or not you can come to the party. (*not* 'Tell me until Friday')

We use **until** (or **till**) to say how long a situation continues:

- 'Shall we go now?' 'No, let's wait **until** (or **till**) it stops raining.'
- I was tired this morning, so I stayed in bed **until half past ten**.

Compare **until** and **by** in these sentences:

- Tom will be away **until Monday**. (so he'll come back on Monday)
- Tom will be back **by Monday**. (= he'll be back on or before Monday, on Monday at the latest)
- I'll be working **until 11 o'clock**. (so I'll stop working at 11 o'clock)
- I'll have finished my work **by 11 o'clock**. (= I'll finish my work at or before 11 o'clock, at 11 o'clock at the latest)

- b) You can also say **by the time** (something happens), Study these examples carefully:
- It's not worth going shopping now. **By the time we get to the shops**, they will be shut. (= they will shut between now and the time we get there)
 - (*from a letter*) I'm flying to the United States this evening. So **by the time you receive this letter**, I'll probably be in New York. (= I will arrive in New York between now and the time you receive this letter.)

When you are talking about the past, you can use **By the time** (something happened), ...

- Tom's car broke down on the way to the party last night. **By the time he arrived**, most of the guests had left. (= It took him a long time to get to the party and most of the guests left during this time.)
- I had a lot of work to do yesterday evening. **By the time I finished**, I was very tired. (= It took me a long time to do the work and I became more and more tired during this time.)
- It took them a long time to find a place to park their car. **By the time they got to the theatre**, the play had already started.

You can also use **by then** or **by that time**:

- Tom finally arrived at the party at midnight. But **by then** (or **by that time**), most of the guests had left.

UNIT 116 Exercises

116.1 Make sentences with **by**.

Example: I have to be at home not later than 5 o'clock. I have to be at home by 5 o'clock.

- I have to be at the airport not later than 10.30.
I have to be at the airport
- Let me know not later than Saturday whether you can come to the party.
Let me know
- Please make sure that you are here not later than 2 o'clock.
Please
- If you want to do the examination, you have to enter not later than 3 April.
If
- If we leave now, we should be in London not later than lunchtime.
If

116.2 In this exercise you have to put in **by** or **until**.

Examples: Tom has gone away. He'll be away until Monday.

Sorry, but I must go. I have to be at home by 5 o'clock.

- I've been offered a job. I haven't decided yet whether to accept it or not. I have to decide Thursday.
- I think I'll wait Thursday before making a decision.
- A: I hear you're writing a book. Have you finished it yet?
B: Not quite, but I hope to finish it the end of this month.
- A: I'm going out now. I'll be back at 4.30. Will you still be here?
B: I don't think so. I'll probably have gone then.
- I'm moving into my new flat next week. I'm staying with some friends then.
- A: Do you think I'll still be unemployed this time next year?
B: No, of course not. I'm sure you'll have found a job that time.

116.3 Read these situations and then complete the sentences using **By the time**

Example: Tom was invited to a party but he got there much later than he intended.

By the time he got to the party, most of the guests had left.

- I had to catch a train but it took me longer than expected to get to the station.
....., my train had left.
- I saw two men who looked as if they were trying to steal a car. So I called the police. But it was some time before the police arrived.
....., the two men had disappeared.
- A man escaped from the prison last night. It was a long time before the guards discovered what had happened.
....., the escaped prisoner was miles away.
- I intended to go shopping after finishing my work. But I finished my work much later than expected.
....., it was too late to go shopping.

Adverbial clauses of time (1): verb tense; before and until;

A Here are some general rules to help you decide what verb tense to use in an *adverbial clause* beginning with *after, as, as soon as, before, until, when, or while*.

■ to talk about the present or past, use the same tense you would use in a main clause:

- I normally look after the children **while** she is practising.
- **When** she heard the results she was overjoyed.

■ to talk about the future, use a present tense:

- Wait here **until** you're ready to go.
- I'll look after the children **while** you are making dinner.

■ to talk about an action that is completed before another action described in the main clause, use either simple or perfect tenses:

- As soon as you see / have seen her, come and tell me.
- She wrote to me **after** she spoke / had spoken to Jim.

However, if we are talking about an action in the adverbial clause that takes place over a period of time, we generally prefer the present perfect:

- After I have written this book, I'm having a holiday. (*rather than* After I write...)
- You can go when you've typed these letters. (*rather than* ...when you type...)

If the two actions take place at the same time, use a simple tense, not a perfect tense:

- Turn the light out as you leave. (*not* ...as you have left.)
- When I saw Kim, I asked her over for dinner. (*not* When I had seen...)

B Before and until

We use **before** if the action or event in the main clause has little or no duration and does not take place until the time represented in the adverbial clause:

- She *walked out* **before** I had a chance to explain.

We can often use either **until** or **before** when a situation described in the main clause lasts until a time indicated in the adverbial clause. In particular:

- to say how far away a future event is: ● It was three days **until/before** the letter arrived.
- if the main clause is negative: ● I didn't think I'd like skiing **until/before** I tried it.

Compare the use of **until** and **before** when the main clause is positive:

- He used to live with us **until/before** he moved down to London.

Here, **until** means 'up to the time'. **Before** means 'at some time before (but not necessarily right up to the time specified)'. If the adverbial clause also describes the *result* of an action in the main clause, we use **until**:

- He cleaned his shoes **until** they shone. ('shining' is the result of 'cleaning')

EXERCISES

94.1 If necessary, correct these sentences. If they are already correct, put ✓. (B, C & D)

- 1 Before you will know it, your children will have grown up.
- 2 I was only just in time. As I had taken my seat, the concert started.
- 3 It's still two hours before I have to be back.
- 4 After I paint the outside of the house I'm going to decorate the kitchen.
- 5 He will be released from prison after he will have served 4 years.
- 6 She will be 25 when she completes her course.
- 7 When the two leaders had met, they shook hands.
- 8 They ordered coffee when they ate their main course.
- 9 You can watch television after you have cleaned your room.
- 10 I won't give up before I will have finished what I set out to do.

94.2 Here are some extracts from the biography of a mountain climber, Daniel Hurst. Write **before** or **until** in the spaces, or **before/until** if both are possible. (C)



- 1 He stayed in the tent the fog cleared. Only then was he able to go on.
- 2 He didn't believe that climbing the south face would be possible he spoke to local villagers who knew of a possible route.
- 3 By taking a shorter but steeper route, he reached base camp his fellow climbers.
- 4 He climbed he was exhausted and could go no further.
- 5 He had to wait five years he had another opportunity to climb Everest.
- 6 Hurst waited with his companion the rescuers came, and then helped them carry her back down the mountain.
- 7 Fortunately, he had left the summit the storm started.