

Success English Foundations

Upper-Intermediate · Speak with Real Precision

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16 units to take your English to a confident, precise level — mixed conditionals, inversion, advanced passives, cleft sentences, hedging language and much more, with clear explanations, real-life examples and short exercises throughout.

Success Coaching and Education Consultancy

Success English Foundations · B2 Level Page 1

01 / 16

Mixed Conditionals

Mixing past and present in one sentence

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Mixed conditionals combine a condition from one time with a result in another — usually a past condition with a present result, or a present condition with a past result.

- Past condition → present result: If + past perfect, ... would + verb
- Present condition → past result: If + past simple, ... would have + verb
- Use: connecting an unreal past action to its ongoing present effect

EXAMPLES

- “If I hadn't missed the flight, I'd be there by now.”*
- “If she weren't so shy, she would have spoken at the meeting.”*
- “If we had left earlier, we wouldn't be stuck in traffic now.”*
- “If he were more organised, he wouldn't have lost the documents.”*
- “If I had learned to drive, I could take you to the station now.”*
- “If you weren't so busy, you would have come to the party.”*
- “If she had taken that job, she would be living in Berlin now.”*
- “If I didn't trust him, I wouldn't have lent him the money.”*

MINI VOCABULARY

- unreal** — not real or true; imagined
- ongoing** — still continuing
- organised** — arranged in an orderly way
- effect** — a result caused by something
- trust** — to believe someone is honest

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Complete: “If I ____ (study) medicine, I would be a doctor now.”
2. Combine a past condition with a present result about a decision you made.
3. Explain why mixed conditionals use two different time forms.

DID YOU KNOW?

Mixed conditionals aren't a separate ‘rule’ — they're simply the second and third conditional combined to match the real timeline of the condition and its result.

02 / 16

Wish and If Only

Expressing regret and desire

GRAMMAR FOCUS

We use wish and if only to talk about things we want to be different — in the present, the past, or about someone's behaviour.

- wish/if only + past simple = present regret
- wish/if only + past perfect = past regret
- wish/if only + would = annoyance about someone's behaviour

EXAMPLES

“I wish I spoke French fluently.”

“If only I had brought an umbrella.”

“She wishes she hadn't said that.”

“I wish you would stop interrupting me.”

“If only we lived closer to the sea.”

“He wishes he had studied harder at school.”

“I wish it would stop raining.”

“If only I knew the answer.”

MINI VOCABULARY

fluently — smoothly and easily, without pausing

regret — a feeling of sadness about something

annoyance — a feeling of mild anger

interrupt — to stop someone while they're speaking

desire — a strong wish for something

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Complete: “I wish I ____ (know) the answer.”
2. Write a sentence with ‘if only’ about a past mistake.
3. Explain why we use ‘would’ with ‘wish’ only for annoyance, not for ourselves.

DID YOU KNOW?

We never use ‘wish + would’ about ourselves — only about other people or situations we can't control.

03 / 16

Inversion for Emphasis

Starting with a negative or limiting adverb

GRAMMAR FOCUS

In formal or literary English, negative and limiting adverbials can move to the front of the sentence, triggering auxiliary-subject inversion, for dramatic emphasis.

- Never, rarely, seldom, hardly + auxiliary + subject
- Not only... but also
- No sooner... than / Only after

EXAMPLES

“Never have I seen such a beautiful sunset.”

“Rarely does she arrive late.”

“Not only did he apologise, but he also brought flowers.”

“No sooner had we sat down than the phone rang.”

“Only after the meeting did I understand the problem.”

“Seldom have I felt so proud.”

“Hardly had she finished speaking when the lights went out.”

“Under no circumstances should you share this password.”

MINI VOCABULARY

emphasis — special importance given to something

dramatic — sudden and striking

literary — relating to written literature

circumstances — the facts of a situation

sunset — the time when the sun goes down

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Rewrite with inversion: “I have never seen such a mess.”
2. Complete: “No sooner ____ (arrive) than it started to rain.”
3. Explain why inversion is more common in writing than speech.

DID YOU KNOW?

Inversion after a negative adverbial follows the same word order as a question — auxiliary before subject.

04 / 16

Future Perfect and Future Continuous

Looking ahead to a point in time

GRAMMAR FOCUS

The Future Perfect (will have + past participle) describes something completed before a future point. The Future Continuous (will be + verb-ing) describes an action in progress at a future point.

- Future Perfect: will have + past participle
- Future Continuous: will be + verb-ing
- Often used with by (perfect) and at this time tomorrow (continuous)

EXAMPLES

“By next year, I will have finished my degree.”

“This time next week, we’ll be lying on a beach.”

“She’ll have left by the time you arrive.”

“They’ll be travelling when the results come out.”

“Will you have finished the report by Friday?”

“I’ll be working late tonight, so don’t wait for me.”

“By 2030, scientists will have developed new treatments.”

“At noon tomorrow, I’ll be sitting in an exam.”

MINI VOCABULARY

complete — finished; with nothing missing

progress — movement forward or advancement

treatment — medical care for an illness

exam — a formal test of knowledge

deadline — the latest time something must be done

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Complete: “By the time we get there, the film ____ (start).”
2. Complete: “This time tomorrow, I ____ (fly) to New York.”
3. Explain the difference between Future Perfect and Future Continuous.

DID YOU KNOW?

Future Perfect Continuous (will have been + verb-ing) adds duration: ‘By June, I will have been working here for ten years.’

05 / 16

Advanced Passive Structures

Passive modals and the causative

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Beyond simple tenses, the passive combines with modal verbs, and the causative have/get something done describes arranging for someone else to do something.

- Modal passive: modal + be + past participle
- Causative: have/get + object + past participle
- Perfect passive: has/have been + past participle

EXAMPLES

“This letter must be signed by tomorrow.”

“The results could be affected by the weather.”

“I’m having my car repaired this week.”

“She got her hair cut yesterday.”

“The report should have been sent already.”

“New rules will be introduced next month.”

“We had our house painted last summer.”

“The matter is being investigated.”

MINI VOCABULARY

causative — showing that someone arranges for an action

arrange — to plan or organise something

investigate — to examine something carefully

affect — to influence or change something

introduce — to bring something in for the first time

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Change to causative: “A mechanic is fixing my car.”
2. Complete: “The decision ____ (must / make) by Friday.”
3. Explain the difference between ‘I cut my hair’ and ‘I had my hair cut’.

DID YOU KNOW?

The causative doesn't always imply payment — ‘I had my bag stolen’ uses the same structure for something that happened to you, not something you arranged.

06 / 16

Reporting Verbs

Beyond said and told

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Advanced reported speech often replaces say/tell with more precise reporting verbs like suggest, deny, admit, insist and warn, each with its own grammar pattern.

- suggest/recommend + -ing or that + subject + verb
- deny/admit + -ing
- insist/warn + (that) + clause, or warn + object + not to

EXAMPLES

“She suggested going for a walk.”

“He denied breaking the window.”

“They admitted making a mistake.”

“She insisted on paying for dinner.”

“He warned us not to be late.”

“The doctor recommended that I rest for a week.”

“She apologised for being late.”

“He accused me of lying.”

MINI VOCABULARY

deny — to say something is not true

admit — to accept that something is true

insist — to demand something firmly

accuse — to say someone has done wrong

recommend — to suggest something as good or suitable

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Report: “I broke it,” he said. (use ‘admit’)
2. Report: “Don’t touch that wire!” she said. (use ‘warn’)
3. Explain the pattern difference between ‘suggest’ and ‘insist on’.

DID YOU KNOW?

‘Suggest’ is never followed directly by an infinitive — ‘suggest to do’ is a very common learner mistake; use ‘suggest doing’ or ‘suggest that’.

07 / 16

Past Modals of Speculation

must have, might have, can't have

GRAMMAR FOCUS

To speculate about the past, we use modal + have + past participle. Must have shows near certainty, might/could have shows possibility, and can't have shows disbelief.

- must have + past participle = I'm sure it happened
- might/could have + past participle = it's possible
- can't/couldn't have + past participle = I'm sure it didn't happen

EXAMPLES

“She must have left already — her coat's gone.”

“He might have missed the bus.”

“They could have forgotten the meeting.”

“That can't have been easy for you.”

“I should have called first — sorry.”

“You must have been exhausted after the trip.”

“She couldn't have known about the change.”

“We might have taken a wrong turn.”

MINI VOCABULARY

speculate — to guess without complete evidence

disbelief — the feeling of not believing something

assume — to believe something without proof

forgotten — past participle of forget

trip — a journey to a place

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Complete: “The light's off — they ____ (must / leave).”
2. Make a guess about a missed appointment using ‘might have’.
3. Explain the difference between ‘should have’ and ‘must have’.

DID YOU KNOW?

‘Should have’ expresses regret about a missed obligation, while ‘must have’ expresses a logical conclusion — they're not interchangeable.

08 / 16

Advanced Relative Clauses

whom, prepositions and reduced clauses

GRAMMAR FOCUS

At B2, relative clauses can include prepositions before whom/which, and can sometimes be reduced to participle phrases for a more natural, less formal style.

- preposition + whom/which: the person to whom I spoke
- reduced clause (-ing): the man standing there (who is standing)
- reduced clause (-ed): the book written by her (which was written)

EXAMPLES

“The woman to whom I spoke was very helpful.”

“The topic about which we argued is still unresolved.”

“The man standing by the door is my uncle.”

“The letter written last week hasn't arrived yet.”

“Anyone wishing to leave early should tell the manager.”

“The results published yesterday surprised everyone.”

“This is the colleague with whom I share an office.”

“People living in the city often complain about noise.”

MINI VOCABULARY

unresolved — not yet settled or solved

surprise — to cause a feeling of shock or wonder

colleague — a person you work with

complain — to say you're unhappy about something

participle — a verb form used as an adjective

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Combine using ‘to whom’: “I gave the book to a friend. She loved it.”
2. Reduce: “The car which is parked outside is mine.”
3. Explain when a reduced relative clause uses -ing versus -ed.

DID YOU KNOW?

Reduced relative clauses drop the relative pronoun and auxiliary verb — active meaning takes -ing, passive meaning takes the past participle.

09 / 16

Participle Clauses

Combining ideas concisely

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Participle clauses (using -ing, -ed or having + past participle) let you combine two related actions or ideas into one sentence, common in more formal or literary writing.

- -ing clause: shows an action happening at the same time or a cause
- -ed clause: has a passive meaning
- having + past participle: shows an earlier completed action

EXAMPLES

“Feeling tired, she went to bed early.”

“Having finished the report, he went home.”

“Written in 1997, the novel became a bestseller.”

“Not knowing what to say, I stayed silent.”

“Having lived in Spain for years, she speaks fluent Spanish.”

“Exhausted by the journey, they fell asleep quickly.”

“Seen from above, the city looks beautiful.”

“Having been warned twice, he finally listened.”

MINI VOCABULARY

bestseller — a very popular, best-selling book

novel — a long fictional story

silent — making no sound

journey — an act of travelling somewhere

combine — to join two or more things together

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Combine using a participle clause: “She finished her homework. Then she watched TV.”
2. Complete: “_____ (not / know) the way, we asked for directions.”
3. Explain why ‘having + past participle’ shows an earlier action.

DID YOU KNOW?

Participle clauses need the same subject in both parts of the sentence — otherwise the sentence becomes a classic ‘dangling participle’ error.

10 / 16

Emphasis and Cleft Sentences

It was... that / What I need is...

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Cleft sentences split one idea into two clauses to emphasise a particular part of the sentence — often using *It is/was... that*, or *What... is/was*.

- It + be + emphasised part + that/who + clause
- What + clause + is/was + emphasised part
- All + clause + is/was + emphasised part

EXAMPLES

“It was Maria who solved the problem.”

“It’s the noise that bothers me most.”

“What I need is a good night’s sleep.”

“What really annoys me is his attitude.”

“All I want is a bit of peace and quiet.”

“It was in 2019 that they got married.”

“What surprised me was how calm she stayed.”

“All she did was ask a simple question.”

MINI VOCABULARY

emphasise — to give special importance to something

attitude — a way of thinking or feeling about something

annoy — to make someone slightly angry

peace — a state of calm and quiet

bother — to disturb or worry someone

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Rewrite with ‘It was... that’: “Tom broke the window.”
2. Rewrite with ‘What... is’: “I need more time.”
3. Explain what part of the sentence a cleft sentence highlights.

DID YOU KNOW?

Cleft sentences are extremely common in spoken English for emphasis — ‘What I love is...’ sounds far more natural than simply stressing a word.

11 / 16

Advanced Linking Words

whereas, provided that, given that

GRAMMAR FOCUS

At B2, linking words express contrast, condition and reason with more precision — useful for essays, debates and formal speech.

- **whereas / while** = contrast between two facts
- **provided that / as long as / unless** = condition
- **given that / seeing that** = reason

EXAMPLES

“Some people love the city, whereas others prefer the countryside.”

“You can borrow the car, provided that you fill it up with petrol.”

“Unless it rains, we’ll have the picnic outside.”

“Given that ticket prices have risen, fewer people are travelling.”

“As long as you finish by Friday, the deadline is flexible.”

“While I understand your point, I still disagree.”

“Seeing that the shop is closed, we’ll have to come back tomorrow.”

“You won’t pass the exam unless you study regularly.”

MINI VOCABULARY

contrast — a clear difference between things

flexible — able to change or adapt

countryside — land away from towns and cities

petrol — fuel used in most cars

regularly — often, at consistent intervals

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Join with ‘whereas’: “My brother loves sport. I prefer reading.”
2. Complete: “I’ll help you, ____ you help me too.” (provided that)
3. Explain the difference between ‘given that’ and ‘provided that’.

DID YOU KNOW?

‘Whereas’ and ‘while’ both show contrast, but ‘while’ can also mean ‘during the time that’ — context tells you which meaning is intended.

12 / 16

Ellipsis and Substitution

Avoiding repetition naturally

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Native speakers avoid repeating words by leaving them out (ellipsis) or replacing them with short forms like so, neither, one, do so.

- so/neither + auxiliary + subject: agreeing with someone
- one/ones: replacing a countable noun already mentioned
- do so: replacing a whole verb phrase

EXAMPLES

“I love coffee. — So do I.”

“She hasn't finished. — Neither have I.”

“I need a pen. Do you have one?”

“These shoes are nice, but I prefer the black ones.”

“He promised to help, and he did so immediately.”

“A: Can you swim? B: I can, yes.”

“I don't like horror films, and neither does my sister.”

“If you want to leave, you may do so now.”

MINI VOCABULARY

repetition — saying or doing something again

ellipsis — leaving words out of a sentence

substitution — replacing one thing with another

immediately — at once; without delay

horror — a strong feeling of fear or shock

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Respond with ‘so’: “I'm exhausted.” — “_____”
2. Respond with ‘neither’: “I haven't seen that film.”
3. Explain what ‘one’ replaces in “I need a bigger one.”

DID YOU KNOW?

Ellipsis isn't sloppy English — leaving out predictable words is one of the clearest signs of a fluent, natural speaker.

13 / 16

Advanced Quantifiers

a great deal of, whichever, whatever

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Beyond some/any/much/many, B2 English uses more precise quantifiers for emphasis, formality, and open choice.

- a great deal of / a huge amount of + uncountable
- a (large) number of / a handful of + countable
- whichever / whatever + noun = open choice

EXAMPLES

“We spent a great deal of time on this project.”

“A number of students failed the exam.”

“Take whichever seat you like.”

“Whatever decision you make, I’ll support you.”

“Only a handful of people came to the meeting.”

“There’s a huge amount of information online.”

“Choose whatever colour suits you best.”

“A large number of complaints were received.”

MINI VOCABULARY

quantity — an amount of something

complaint — a statement that something is wrong

decision — a choice made after thinking

suit — to be right or convenient for someone

handful — a small number of people or things

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Complete: “There’s ____ (a great deal / a number) of traffic today.”
2. Complete: “____ you decide, let me know.” (whichever / whatever)
3. Explain the difference between ‘a number of’ and ‘the number of’.

DID YOU KNOW?

‘A number of’ takes a plural verb (‘A number of people are coming’), but ‘the number of’ takes a singular verb (‘The number of people is rising’).

14 / 16

Advanced Gerunds and Infinitives

Perfect gerunds and verb + object patterns

GRAMMAR FOCUS

At B2, gerunds and infinitives combine with perfect forms, and many verbs require an object before the infinitive.

- having + past participle (perfect gerund) = an earlier action
- verb + object + to + verb: want/ask/expect + someone + to do
- need + -ing = passive meaning (the car needs washing)

EXAMPLES

“I regret having said that.”

“She admitted having lied.”

“They asked me to wait outside.”

“We expect the team to win.”

“The car needs washing.”

“This shirt needs ironing.”

“He denied having taken the money.”

“I want you to be honest with me.”

MINI VOCABULARY

honest — truthful and sincere

expect — to think something will happen

request — to ask for something politely

confess — to admit that you did something

spotless — completely clean

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Complete: “She denied ____ (take) the file.”
2. Complete: “This room needs ____ (clean).”
3. Explain the difference between ‘remember doing’ and ‘remember to do’.

DID YOU KNOW?

‘Need + -ing’ has a passive meaning even though it looks active — ‘my hair needs cutting’ means ‘my hair needs to be cut’.

15 / 16

Hedging and Polite Language

Softening opinions and requests

GRAMMAR FOCUS

B2 speakers soften direct statements and requests using modal verbs, tentative phrases and vague language, to sound more polite or less certain.

- I was wondering if... / Would you mind...? = polite requests
- seem to / tend to / appear to = softened opinions
- sort of / kind of / a bit = vague softeners

EXAMPLES

“I was wondering if you could help me with this.”

“Would you mind closing the window?”

“She seems to be struggling with the workload.”

“People tend to avoid difficult conversations.”

“It's sort of complicated to explain.”

“He appears to have misunderstood the instructions.”

“I'd rather you didn't mention this to anyone.”

“Could you possibly send that file again?”

MINI VOCABULARY

soften — to make something less harsh

tentative — not certain or fixed

workload — the amount of work to be done

struggle — to have difficulty doing something

instructions — directions on how to do something

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Make this more polite: “Close the door.”
2. Complete: “She ____ (seem) to know everyone here.”
3. Explain why hedging language is useful in formal emails.

DID YOU KNOW?

Overusing direct commands in emails can sound rude in English — native speakers often prefer indirect, hedged requests even for simple favours.

16 / 16

Everyday B2 Vocabulary

Media, society & the environment — bringing it all together

GRAMMAR FOCUS

In this final unit, you'll combine grammar from Units 1–15 with essential B2 vocabulary about media, society and the environment — themes common in discussions, essays and exams.

- Media: headline, bias, coverage, go viral
- Society: inequality, diversity, community, upbringing
- Environment: renewable, emissions, footprint, sustainability

EXAMPLES

- “The headline was misleading, to say the least.”*
- “Given the coverage it received, the story quickly went viral.”*
- “Whereas some countries invest in renewables, others rely on fossil fuels.”*
- “Had the government acted sooner, emissions would have been lower.”*
- “It's the growing inequality that worries economists most.”*
- “Not only did the article show bias, but it also omitted key facts.”*
- “By 2050, many cities will have reduced their carbon footprint.”*
- “I wish more people took sustainability seriously.”*

MINI VOCABULARY

- headline** — the title of a news story
- inequality** — unfair difference between people
- renewable** — energy that doesn't run out, like solar or wind
- emissions** — gases released into the air
- footprint** — the impact something has on the environment

✓ CHECK YOURSELF

1. Discuss a recent news story using a cleft sentence (‘It was... that...’).
2. Talk about a change you wish would happen, using ‘wish’ + would.
3. Give your opinion on sustainability using ‘given that’ or ‘provided that’.

DID YOU KNOW?

Congratulations — you're ready for C1! At B2 you can now discuss abstract, complex and even controversial topics with real fluency and precision.



Well Done!

You've completed Success English Foundations — B2.

Sixteen units, one confident new level of English. Here's everything you've mastered:

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| 03 Inversion for Emphasis | 11 Advanced Linking Words |
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WHAT'S NEXT?

This eBook is designed only as a free guide to give direction to your lessons. For personalised coaching and to go further with your English — towards fluent C1 conversations — book your free appointment today.

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