

**SKILL 15: LISTEN FOR UNTRUE CONDITIONS**

Conversations containing conditions can appear in the short dialogues. The important idea to remember about conditions is that a condition implies that the *opposite of the condition is true*.

**Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests**

On the recording, you hear:

(man) *Do you think that you'll be able to go to the party?*

(woman) *If I had time, I would go.*

(narrator) *What does the woman say about the party?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) Maybe she'll go.
- (B) She has time, so she'll go.
- (C) She is going even if she doesn't have time.
- (D) It's impossible to go.

In this question, the condition *If I had time* implies that the opposite is true: The woman does not have time for the party, so *it's impossible to go*. Therefore, the best answer to this question is answer (D).

The following box outlines the key points that you should know about untrue conditions:

KEY INFORMATION ABOUT UNTRUE CONDITIONS		
Point	Example	Meaning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An <i>affirmative</i> condition implies a <i>negative</i> reality.</li> <li>• A <i>negative</i> condition implies an <i>affirmative</i> reality.</li> </ul>	<p>If she <i>were at home</i>, she could do it.*</p> <p>If she <i>weren't at home</i>, she could do it.</p>	<p>= not at home</p> <p>= at home</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A <i>past</i> tense implies a <i>present</i> reality.</li> <li>• A <i>past perfect</i> verb implies a <i>past</i> reality.</li> </ul>	<p>If I <i>had</i> money, I would buy it.</p> <p>If I <i>had had</i> money, I would have bought it.</p>	<p>= do not have money</p> <p>= did not have money</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Had</i> can be used without <i>if</i>.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Had I had</i> money, I would have bought it.**</p>	<p>= did not have money</p>

\*Remember that *were* is used instead of *was* in untrue conditions: "If I *were* there, I would help."

\*\*This has the same meaning as "If I had had money...." Note that the subject and "had" are inverted.

**EXERCISE 15:** In this exercise, underline the condition in each short dialogue. Then read the question and choose the best answer to that question. Remember that the best answer is one that implies the opposite of what is said.

1. (man) *Are you going to have something to eat?*  
 (woman) *If the food looked fresh, I would eat some.*  
 (narrator) *What does the woman mean?*  
 (A) She is not going to eat.  
 (B) The food looks fresh.  
 (C) She doesn't like fresh food.  
 (D) She already ate something.
2. (woman) *The flight must have taken longer than usual.*  
 (man) *Had the flight left on time, we would not have arrived so late.*  
 (narrator) *What does the man say about the flight?*  
 (A) It arrived early.  
 (B) It was unusually short.  
 (C) It left on time.  
 (D) It departed late.
3. (man) *Are you sure you want to go out? You do not seem to be feeling very well.*  
 (woman) *If there were some aspirin in the medicine cabinet, I would not need to go to the drugstore.*  
 (narrator) *What does the woman mean?*  
 (A) She really is feeling fine.  
 (B) There is plenty of aspirin in the medicine cabinet.  
 (C) It is necessary to get some aspirin.  
 (D) She does not need to go out.

**TOEFL EXERCISE 15:** In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of untrue conditions.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 15.

1. (A) The woman did not need to call him.  
 (B) The woman called to let him know about the meeting.  
 (C) He's not glad that the woman called.  
 (D) He already knew about the meeting when the woman called.
2. (A) The man often drives too quickly.  
 (B) The police do not stop the man too much.  
 (C) The man drove rather slowly.  
 (D) The police should not stop the man so often.
3. (A) She's so happy they don't have to work on Friday.  
 (B) It would be nice if they could finish their work on Friday.  
 (C) She wonders if the man would be nice enough to come in to work in her place on Friday.  
 (D) It's too bad they must work on Friday.
4. (A) She did not put enough postage on the letter.  
 (B) The letter arrived last week.  
 (C) The letter did not need more postage.  
 (D) She did not put any postage on the letter.
5. (A) He has a dog.  
 (B) He doesn't pay attention to dogs.  
 (C) He wishes he had a dog.  
 (D) Dogs do not need much attention.
6. (A) They knew they had to prepare for the exam.  
 (B) They didn't prepare for the exam.  
 (C) As soon as they knew about the exam, they began to prepare for it.  
 (D) They knew that the preparation for the exam would take a lot of time.

7. (A) It costs too much for him to go.  
 (B) He agrees to go with them.  
 (C) He is unworried about the cost of the restaurant.  
 (D) The restaurant is rather inexpensive.
8. (A) When Joe saw the car coming, he tried to get out of the way.  
 (B) Joe was able to get out of the way because he saw the car coming.  
 (C) Joe jumped out of the way of the oncoming car.  
 (D) Because Joe didn't see the car coming, he couldn't get out of the way.
9. (A) The woman didn't come.  
 (B) The woman wanted to be there.  
 (C) The woman was going to leave immediately.  
 (D) The woman was not really there.
10. (A) Kathy didn't work as hard as possible because she didn't know what the reward was.  
 (B) Kathy couldn't have put more effort into the project to win the prize.  
 (C) Kathy won first prize because of her hard work on the art project.  
 (D) Kathy worked so hard that she knew first prize was hers.

**TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 14–15):** In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE (SKILLS 14–15).

1. (A) She enjoys violent movies.  
 (B) She would have preferred a more violent movie.  
 (C) She thinks the film was too violent.  
 (D) She enjoyed the movie.
2. (A) He left the windows open.  
 (B) The rain did not get in.  
 (C) He forgot to close the windows.  
 (D) The rain got into the house.
3. (A) Her family is unable to come to graduation.  
 (B) It is possible that her family will come.  
 (C) Her parents are coming to the ceremonies.  
 (D) She is not graduating this year.
4. (A) He is going to miss the conference.  
 (B) He will take his vacation next week.  
 (C) He will attend the conference.  
 (D) He won't miss his vacation.
5. (A) He enjoys chemistry lab.  
 (B) He doesn't have chemistry lab this afternoon.  
 (C) He isn't taking chemistry class.  
 (D) He has to go to the lab.
6. (A) They filled up the gas tank at the last service station.  
 (B) Although they filled up the tank, they still ran out of gas.  
 (C) Even though they didn't stop at the service station, they didn't run out of gas.  
 (D) They ran out of gas because they didn't stop at the gas station.
7. (A) His schedule is not really heavy.  
 (B) He needs to add a few more courses.  
 (C) He enrolled in more courses than he really wants.  
 (D) He will register for a lot of courses next semester.
8. (A) She never took the bus to work.  
 (B) She regularly takes the bus.  
 (C) She doesn't know how to get to work.  
 (D) She gets lost on the bus.

9. (A) She bought some eggs at the store.  
 (B) She doesn't have any eggs to lend him.  
 (C) He can borrow some eggs.  
 (D) She didn't go to the store.
10. (A) Teresa is feeling a lot better.  
 (B) The doctor didn't prescribe the medicine.  
 (C) Teresa didn't follow the doctor's orders.  
 (D) Teresa did exactly what the doctor said.

**TOEFL REVIEW EXERCISE (Skills 1–15):** In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL REVIEW EXERCISE (SKILLS 1–15).

1. (A) Drinking the hot tea  
 (B) Making more tea in a few minutes  
 (C) Letting the tea cool off a bit  
 (D) Having the tea immediately
2. (A) In a bus station  
 (B) In a store  
 (C) In a restaurant  
 (D) In a theater
3. (A) He's unhappy to end the semester.  
 (B) He's glad to be finishing school.  
 (C) He couldn't be happier to begin the semester.  
 (D) The end of the semester is making him feel sad.
4. (A) The storm destroyed the house.  
 (B) The house blocked the trees.  
 (C) The stormy weather caused the trees to fall.  
 (D) During the storm, someone knocked on the door of the house.
5. (A) The team hasn't won often.  
 (B) He usually doesn't pay attention to the football team.  
 (C) It's out of the ordinary for the team to lose.  
 (D) He usually hears about the football games.
6. (A) He went to the office every morning.  
 (B) He was not working.  
 (C) He had to arrive at work earlier than 8 o'clock.  
 (D) He had a job.
7. (A) He did not enjoy his vacation as much as possible.  
 (B) He got lost on his vacation.  
 (C) The vacation was really enjoyable.  
 (D) He did not really lose his passport.
8. (A) It will take eight hours to get to Riverdale on the bus.  
 (B) He believes he knows the correct bus.  
 (C) He doesn't know where Riverdale is.  
 (D) He assures the woman that he knows the way to Riverdale.
9. (A) The laboratory assistant completed one experiment.  
 (B) The laboratory assistant couldn't finish one experiment.  
 (C) The laboratory assistant didn't want to do more experiments.  
 (D) None of the experiments could be completed.
10. (A) She would like the man to repeat what he said.  
 (B) The semester is really over!  
 (C) The semester will never end.  
 (D) She has the same wish as the man.