ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Conditional Sentences Test Exercises – Multiple Choice Questions With Answers – Advanced Level 20

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Explanations

1. If we _____ in Istanbul now, we _____ to Sultan Ahmet Mosque together.
✓ **A) were / could go**
Now shows an unreal present situation (we are not in Istanbul), so this is a second conditional: **if + past simple**, **would/could + base verb**. Use **were** for all persons in formal style: **If we were in Istanbul now, we could go…** Not **had been**, because that refers to the past, and not **will be able to**, because **will** belongs to real (first) conditionals.

2. If it hadn't been for your help, we _____ the accident.
✓ **A) couldn't have survived**
The accident happened in the past, and **If it hadn't been for** (= without) your help is an unreal past condition. So the result needs **could/would + have + past participle**: **we couldn't have survived**. Not **might have survived**, because that gives the opposite meaning: the help is what saved us.

3. If you _____ the office early, you _____ me to meet you earlier.
✓ **C) had left / should have phoned**
The speaker is criticising something that did not happen in the past, so we need **should have + past participle** (**you should have phoned**) in the result. The past perfect **had left** in the if-clause matches this past time frame. Not **must have phoned**, because **must have** is used for deductions about the past, not for criticism.

4. If you _____ of the children more elaborately, they _____ those pills.
✓ **D) had taken care / wouldn't have swallowed**
The children have already swallowed the pills, so this is an unreal past situation: a third conditional, **if + past perfect** (**had taken care**), **would + have + past participle** (**wouldn't have swallowed**). **Would swallowed** is ungrammatical, because after **would** we need the base form or **have + past participle**.

5. If you _____ that oily meal, you _____ ill.
✓ **E) hadn't eaten / wouldn't have been**
This is a third conditional about the past: **if + past perfect**, **would + have + past participle**. The meal made you ill, so both parts are negative: **If you hadn't eaten…, you wouldn't have been ill.** Not **hadn't eaten / would have been**, because that gives an illogical meaning.

6. If I _____ how far away the concert hall was, I _____ there by bus.
✓ **C) had realized / would have gone**
The speaker did not realise the distance in the past, so this is a third conditional: **if + past perfect** (**had realized**), **would + have + past participle** (**would have gone**). The other options mix tenses that do not fit an unreal past situation.

7. The balance of nature cannot possibly be maintained _____.
✓ **D) unless every individual and every organization realizes how important it is to protect our environment**
Unless means **if… not**. The sentence means the balance of nature cannot be kept **if everyone does not realize** how important protection is. The present tense **realizes** fits the general present statement. The other options use past tenses or connectors (**why**, **since**, **before**) that do not fit the meaning or the tense.

8. I wish I _____ in Canakkale now, then I _____ go to Kabatepe Beach.
✓ **E) were / could**
Wish + past simple expresses a wish about the present: **I wish I were in Canakkale now.** (**were** is used for all persons). The result of this imaginary situation takes **could + base verb**: **then I could go**. Not **would be**, because we don't normally use **would** after **I wish I** for our own present state.

9. If I _____ the novels during the summer holiday, I _____ the lesson now.
✓ **D) had read / could understand**
This is a mixed conditional: an unreal past condition (**had read** during the holiday) with a present result (**now**). The structure is **if + past perfect**, **could/would + base verb**: **I could understand the lesson now.** Not **could have understood**, because **now** shows a present result, not a past one.

10. I can lend you that amount of money _____ you pay it back to me by next month.
✓ **C) provided that**
Provided that means **only if / on condition that**: I will lend you the money only if you pay it back by next month. Not **suppose**, because it introduces an imaginary situation and cannot join a condition to a real offer like this.

11. But for your help, I _____ painting all the walls in one day.
✓ **E) couldn't have finished**
But for means **if it hadn't been for / without**. It needs an unreal result, here about the past: **I couldn't have finished** (**could + have + past participle**). The present and future forms (**can't**, **won't be able to**) cannot be used for an unreal condition.

12. I wish I _____ my bike with me when I came here.
✓ **D) had taken**
Wish + past perfect expresses regret about the past: **I wish I had taken my bike** (but I didn't). The clue is **when I came here**, which is past. Not **took**, because **wish** + past simple refers to the present.

13. If you _____ in our sports activities during the year, you _____ so slim now.
✓ **E) hadn't participated / couldn't be**
This is a mixed conditional: an unreal past condition (**hadn't participated** during the year) with a present result (**now**). So we use **if + past perfect** and **couldn't + base verb**: **you couldn't be so slim now.** Not **couldn't have been**, because **now** shows the result is in the present.

14. If you _____ me that the exam was cancelled, I _____ here so early in the morning.
✓ **E) had told / wouldn't have come**
You didn't tell me, and I came: this is an unreal past situation, so we use a third conditional, **if + past perfect** (**had told**), **would + have + past participle** (**wouldn't have come**). Not **had told / won't come**, because **will** cannot follow an unreal past condition.

15. If I _____ care of myself during the holiday in Uludag last week, I _____ ill now.
✓ **B) had taken / wouldn't be**
This is a mixed conditional: the condition is in the past (**last week**), and the result is in the present (**now**). So we use **if + past perfect** (**had taken**) and **would + base verb** (**wouldn't be ill now**). Not **wouldn't have been**, because the clue **now** shows a present result.

16. I wish I _____ that oily meal. I have a terrible stomachache now.
✓ **D) hadn't eaten**
Wish + past perfect expresses regret about a past action: **I wish I hadn't eaten that oily meal** (but I did, and now I have a stomachache). Not **didn't eat**, because **wish** + past simple refers to the present, and **wish** is not followed by **shouldn't have**.

17. If it weren't for teachers in a country, the new generations _____ ignorant.
✓ **D) would be**
If it weren't for (= without) introduces an unreal present or general situation, a second conditional. The result takes **would + base verb**: **the new generations would be ignorant.** Not **would have been**, because that refers to an unreal past.

18. If it hadn't been for teachers in a country, the new generations _____ ignorant.
✓ **A) would have been**
If it hadn't been for (= without) introduces an unreal past condition, a third conditional. The result takes **would + have + past participle**: **the new generations would have been ignorant.** Not **had been**, because the main clause of a conditional needs a modal such as **would**.

19. Had you invited me to the picnic, I _____.
✓ **D) might have come**
Had you invited me is an inverted third conditional (= **If you had invited me**). It refers to an unreal past, so the result needs **modal + have + past participle**: **I might have come.** The other options use present or future forms, which do not fit an unreal past condition.

20. _____ they study regularly can they succeed in lessons that require memorization.
✓ **A) Only when**
Only when at the start of a sentence causes inversion in the main clause: **Only when they study regularly can they succeed.** The inverted **can they** is the clue. Not **On condition that**, because it is not followed by inversion (**On condition that they study, they can succeed**).

21. If our possessions _____ away from us, our feelings of resentment at people's injustice _____ very strong.
✓ **E) are taken / can be**
This is a general truth about people, so we use a real conditional: if + present simple (**are taken**) and a present modal (**can be**). Here **can** means 'it is possible'. Not **were taken / may be**: a second conditional normally uses **would/could/might** in the result. Not **had been taken / will be**, because **will** cannot follow an unreal past condition.

22. If the election were held today, almost twice as many people say they _____ for the current mayor as for her rival.
✓ **D) would vote**
If the election were held today is an unreal present condition, a second conditional. The result takes **would + base verb**: **they would vote**. Not **would have voted**, because that refers to an unreal past, and **today** shows the present.

23. If you _____ someone dear to you with such an illness, _____ him to ask his doctor about therapy.
✓ **A) have / encourage**
This is a real present condition followed by advice. We use **if + present simple** (**have**) and an imperative in the main clause: **encourage him to ask his doctor.** Not **had / encourage**, because the situation is real and present, not imaginary.

24. If they _____ the instructions in advance, they _____ that the exam would be in the other building.
✓ **B) had read / would have known**
They didn't read the instructions, so they didn't know: an unreal past situation. Use a third conditional: **if + past perfect** (**had read**), **would + have + past participle** (**would have known**). Not **read / knew**, because the result clause needs **would**.

25. If I _____ what the river was like, I _____ a different line of approach to the other side.
✓ C) had known / would have chosen
The speaker didn't know what the river was like in the past, so this is a third conditional: **if + past perfect** (**had known**), **would + have + past participle** (**would have chosen**). Not **must have chosen**, because **must have** expresses a deduction, not a conditional result.

26. If they _____ any idea about who took the money, they _____ the police.
✓ B) had had / would have told
They had no idea, so they didn't tell the police: an unreal past situation. Use a third conditional: **if + past perfect** (**had had**, where the first **had** is the auxiliary and the second is the main verb), **would + have + past participle** (**would have told**). Not **had / had told**, because the result clause needs **would**.

27. If your student _____ a mistake, you _____ him in the classroom. But you can warn him later.
✓ E) has made / shouldn't embarrass
This is a real condition followed by advice. The present perfect **has made** in the if-clause refers to a completed action. The main clause gives advice with **shouldn't** + base verb: **you shouldn't embarrass him**. The next sentence, **But you can warn him later**, fits this advice. Not **makes / wouldn't embarrass**, because the situation is real, not imaginary. Not **mustn't have embarrassed**, because **mustn't have** + past participle is not used for advice.

28. You _____ problems of discipline with your children if you _____ them watch TV more than an hour.
✓ C) may have / let
This is a real conditional about a possible situation: present simple in the if-clause (**let**), and a modal of possibility in the main clause (**may have**). Not **have / will let**, because we don't normally use **will** in an if-clause to talk about the future.

29. _____ for the changes made to the school's admission regulations, very few students _____ before the year started.
✓ E) Had it not been / would have enrolled
Had it not been for is the inverted form of **If it hadn't been for** (= without). The time clue **before the year started** shows an unreal past, so the result takes **would + have + past participle**: **would have enrolled**. Not **Were it not / would enroll**, because that is a second conditional for present or general situations.

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