

# English Ladder

## Student Workbook

## Expressing Optimism or Pessimism in English

A polished self-study handout designed for print or tablet use. Read the concept, notice the pattern, and then complete the matching practice set on your own.



Grammar Concepts #08

Key Points

Practice with Example Sentences

Tips for Non-Native Speakers

### Visual anchor

Use the concept poster to spotlight the main language pattern in **Expressing Optimism or Pessimism in English** and keep the explanation visible during practice and discussion.

**ENGLISH LADDER**

Concept #08 ► **Expressing Optimism/Pessimism**

We use different words and different verb styles when we are positive (optimistic) or negative (pessimistic).

**WHICH TWIN...?**

**When I marry Sarah, I will build her a house!** (Close to 100% certainty)  
**When – marry – will**

**If I marry Sarah, I will build her a house!** (Around a 50% certainty)  
**If – marry – will**

**If I (ever) married Sarah, I would build her a house!** (Perhaps a 1% certainty)  
**If – married – would**

**I have a chance!**

**I have no chance!**

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## Core Idea

In English, we use different words and verb styles to express different levels of certainty or optimism about future events. This image illustrates how to convey optimism and pessimism through different grammatical structures. Let's break down these concepts with detailed explanations, examples, and relevant grammar nomenclature.

### Quick reference

Optimism: High Certainty (Close to 100%)	When: Subordinating conjunction
Neutral: Moderate Certainty (Around a 50%)	If: Subordinating conjunction
Pessimism: Low Certainty (Perhaps a 1%)	If: Subordinating conjunction

## Key Points

### Optimism: High Certainty (Close to 100%)

Structure: When - Simple Present - will + Base Form

- Grammar Nomenclature:
- When: Subordinating conjunction
- Simple Present: Used to indicate a future event that is seen as certain
- will + Base Form: Simple future tense
- Explanation: This structure is used when we are almost certain that something will happen in the future. The use of "when" indicates a high degree of certainty, and "will" is used to indicate a future action.
- Example Sentence: When I marry Sarah, I will build her a house.
- Additional Examples:
- When it stops raining, we will go for a walk.
- When he finishes his homework, he will play video games.
- When they arrive, we will start the meeting.

### Neutral: Moderate Certainty (Around a 50%)



Structure: If - Simple Present - will + Base Form

- Grammar Nomenclature:
- If: Subordinating conjunction
- Simple Present: Used to indicate a possible future event
- will + Base Form: Simple future tense
- Explanation: This structure is used when we think something might happen, but we are not sure. The use of "if" indicates that there is a possibility, but it is not guaranteed. "Will" is still used to indicate the future action.
- Example Sentence: If I marry Sarah, I will build her a house.
- Additional Examples:
- If it stops raining, we will go for a walk.
- If he finishes his homework, he will play video games.
- If they arrive, we will start the meeting.

### **Pessimism: Low Certainty (Perhaps a 1%)**

Structure: If - Simple Past - would + Base Form

- Grammar Nomenclature:
- If: Subordinating conjunction
- Simple Past: Used to indicate a hypothetical situation
- would + Base Form: Conditional mood
- Explanation: This structure is used when we think something is very unlikely to happen. The use of "if" combined with the past tense "married" shows that it is a hypothetical situation. "Would" is used to indicate what might happen in that unlikely scenario.
- Example Sentence: If I (ever) married Sarah, I would build her a house.
- Additional Examples:
- If it stopped raining, we would go for a walk. (But it's unlikely to stop raining.)
- If he finished his homework, he would play video games. (But he probably won't finish.)
- If they arrived, we would start the meeting. (But we don't expect them to arrive.)

## **Practice with Example Sentences**

To get more comfortable with these structures, let's practice with a variety of scenarios.

### **Scenario 1: Traveling to Japan**



- High Certainty: When I travel to Japan, I will visit Kyoto.
- Moderate Certainty: If I travel to Japan, I will visit Kyoto.
- Low Certainty: If I (ever) traveled to Japan, I would visit Kyoto.

### Scenario 2: Buying a New Car

- High Certainty: When I buy a new car, I will choose a hybrid model.
- Moderate Certainty: If I buy a new car, I will choose a hybrid model.
- Low Certainty: If I (ever) bought a new car, I would choose a hybrid model.

### Scenario 3: Learning a New Language

- High Certainty: When I learn Spanish, I will practice every day.
- Moderate Certainty: If I learn Spanish, I will practice every day.
- Low Certainty: If I (ever) learned Spanish, I would practice every day.

## Tips for Non-Native Speakers

- Identify the level of certainty: Decide how certain you are about the event happening. This will help you choose the correct structure.
- Practice with different scenarios: Create your own sentences using different levels of certainty to get familiar with these structures.
- Pay attention to verb forms: Notice the changes in verb forms when switching from high certainty (present and future forms) to low certainty (past forms and conditional).

By understanding and practicing these structures, you can more accurately express your optimism or pessimism about future events in English.



## Practice Check

Answer the quiz questions below with the correct verb forms.

### ITEM 01

When I \_\_\_\_\_ my homework, I will go out with friends. (complete)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 02

If it \_\_\_\_\_ tomorrow, we will cancel the picnic. (rain)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 03

If she \_\_\_\_\_ the test, she would be very happy. (pass)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 04

When they \_\_\_\_\_, we will start the meeting. (arrive)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 05

If I \_\_\_\_\_ a new car, I will choose a hybrid model. (buy)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 06

If I \_\_\_\_\_ to Japan, I would visit Kyoto. (travel)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 07

When he \_\_\_\_\_ his project, he will submit it. (finish)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 08

If it \_\_\_\_\_ raining, we will go for a walk. (stop)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 09

If she \_\_\_\_\_ the lottery, she would buy a house. (win)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 10

When the sun \_\_\_\_\_, we will start our hike. (rise)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



## ITEM 11

If I \_\_\_\_\_ Spanish, I will practice every day.  
(learn)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 12

If they \_\_\_\_\_ here, we would start the party. (be)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 13

When she \_\_\_\_\_ home, she will call you.  
(get)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 14

If he \_\_\_\_\_ his job, he will travel more.  
(quit)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 15

If they \_\_\_\_\_ a new house, they would be very happy. (buy)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 16

When we \_\_\_\_\_ enough money, we will buy a car. (save)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 17

If the weather \_\_\_\_\_ good, we will go to the beach. (be)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 18

If she \_\_\_\_\_ me, I would be surprised.  
(call)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 19

When I \_\_\_\_\_ to the store, I will buy some milk. (go)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 20

If he \_\_\_\_\_ his keys, he will be late. (lose)

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



## ITEM 21

If I \_\_\_\_\_ rich, I would travel the world. (be)

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 22

When the movie \_\_\_\_\_, we will leave. (end)

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 23

If she \_\_\_\_\_ hard, she will succeed. (work)

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 24

If I \_\_\_\_\_ the president, I would make changes. (be)

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



## Self-check Answer Key

Use the key after you have completed every item on your own.

**ITEM 01**

When I complete my homework, I will go out with friends. (complete)

**ITEM 02**

If it rains tomorrow, we will cancel the picnic. (rain)

**ITEM 03**

If she passed the test, she would be very happy. (pass)

**ITEM 04**

When they arrive, we will start the meeting. (arrive)

**ITEM 05**

If I buy a new car, I will choose a hybrid model. (buy)

**ITEM 06**

If I traveled to Japan, I would visit Kyoto. (travel)

**ITEM 07**

When he finishes his project, he will submit it. (finish)

**ITEM 08**

If it stops raining, we will go for a walk. (stop)

**ITEM 09**

If she won the lottery, she would buy a house. (win)

**ITEM 10**

When the sun rises, we will start our hike. (rise)

**ITEM 11**

If I learn Spanish, I will practice every day. (learn)

**ITEM 12**

If they were here, we would start the party. (be)

**ITEM 13**

When she gets home, she will call you. (get)

**ITEM 14**

If he quits his job, he will travel more. (quit)



ITEM 15

If they bought a new house, they would be very happy. (buy)

ITEM 16

When we save enough money, we will buy a car. (save)

ITEM 17

If the weather is good, we will go to the beach. (be)

ITEM 18

If she called me, I would be surprised. (call)

ITEM 19

When I go to the store, I will buy some milk. (go)

ITEM 20

If he loses his keys, he will be late. (lose)

ITEM 21

If I were rich, I would travel the world. (be)

ITEM 22

When the movie ends, we will leave. (end)

ITEM 23

If she works hard, she will succeed. (work)

ITEM 24

If I were the president, I would make changes. (be)