

How honest are you? part 3

Q 3 If you were to find a wallet on the street, would you hand it in to the police?

- A Yes, I would, unless it had a lot of money in it!
- B Yes, provided there was something that showed who the owner was, like a bank card or a driving licence.
- C No, I'd keep it, so long as no one saw me pick it up.

Q 4 Were an advertising agency to offer you a part in an ad for a product you didn't actually like, would you accept the job?

- A Yes, so long as I thought the product was harmless.
- B No, I would never sell a product unless I really believed in it.
- C Yes, provided the money was good enough!



Presentation

unless

Unless = if... not or except if ...

I would never sell a product **unless** I really believed in it.
(= If I didn't believe in it, I wouldn't sell it.)

I won't go **unless** you go too. (= I'll only go if you go.)

so/as long as, provided/providing

These expressions mean *only if* or *on condition that*:

I would keep it, **as long as** no one saw me.

Provided/Providing are more formal than *as/so long as*:

I would accept the job **provided** the money was good enough. (= only if the money was good enough)

If I were to ..., Were I to ..., Had I ...

In *if* clauses which talk about imaginary future situations, you can replace the past simple with *were + to + infinitive* to emphasize the improbability of the situation:

If I saw him ... → If I were to see him ...

It is also possible to drop *if* and invert the order of the subject and *were*:

If I were to see him ... → Were I to see him ...

If you won ... → Were you to win ...

Were I to is far less frequent than *If I were to*.

You cannot use *were ... to ...* to talk about imaginary present situations:

If I knew how to swim (but I don't) ... (not ~~Were I to know~~ how to swim ...)

However, you can use inversion with the verb *to be* + adjective to talk about imaginary present situations:

Were I rich, I'd live a life of luxury.

In *if* clauses which talk about imaginary past situations, you can drop *if* and reverse the order of *had* and the subject:

If I'd known ... → Had I known ...

TIP The inverted forms are more formal and distant than standard *if* clauses.

Exercises

1  Write *unless* or *as long as* in the gaps. Then listen and check.

- 1 A: Would you steal from a member of your own family?
B: No, not I really, really had to.
- 2 A: Can I borrow your bike?
B: Yes, you bring it back before five.
- 3 A: You know who the winner is, don't you? Go on, you can tell me.
B: OK, but only you don't tell anyone else. It's supposed to be a secret.
- 4 A: Would you like to sit by the window?
B: Yes, please. you want to sit there, of course.
- 5 A: Are you going out this afternoon?
B: No, I don't think so, Paul calls me to play football.
- 6 A: Would you jump from a flying aeroplane?
B: Yes, I had a parachute!

2 Rewrite the sentences using the word or words in bold.

- 1 I'll get the bus if Glen can't take me in the car.
unless
- 2 Give me £5.00 and I'll clean your car for you.
provided
- 3 We could go out to eat, or if you prefer, we could stay at home and order a takeaway.
unless
- 4 You can come in, but you have to leave before my parents get back.
as long as
- 5 I really didn't want to do it if Simon wasn't going to help me.
unless

3 Rewrite the *if* clause using *were to* or *had*.

- 1 If I'd known you were coming, I'd have made more food.
Had I known
- 2 If he found out about all your lies, you'd lose your job.
.....
- 3 If I lost my job, it'd be very hard to find another one in the same town.
.....
- 4 If we'd got here a little sooner, we'd have seen the start of the match.
.....
- 5 If I'd never met you, my life would have been very different.
.....
- 6 If we could start again, things would be so much better.
.....