

# Grammar workshop 3

## Units 9–12

### Tenses in time clauses

- When you talk about an action which finishes before the action in the main clause, you can use either simple or perfect tenses in the time clause:  
*I'll go for lunch as soon as my boss **comes back** / **has come back** from lunch.*  
*He only bought the franchise after he **had gone** / **went** to the trade fair.*
- If you are talking about an action in the time clause which takes place over a period of time, you use the perfect tense:  
*He opened his business after he **had done** extensive market research.*  
*I'll come home as soon as I've **written** these emails.*
- If the actions take place at the same time, you use the simple tense ...  
*Bring him up to the boardroom when he **arrives**.*  
(not: *When he **has arrived** ...*)  
*When he **phoned** the supplier, nobody answered.*  
(not: *When he **had phoned** ...*)  
... although if both happen over a period of time, you can use continuous tenses to emphasise the length of time:  
*While he **was training** to be an accountant, she **was studying** at university.*
- If one action happens at the same time as another, the action which happens for a longer time needs a continuous tense:  
*She often **phones** me when she's **travelling** to work.*

Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tenses in these sentences. In some cases, more than one answer is correct.

- 1 When I *have written* (write) the report, I'll circulate it to the whole department.
- 2 She was taking notes while you ..... (give) the presentation.
- 3 People asked a lot of interesting questions after she ..... (give) the presentation.
- 4 Send the samples to the research department as soon as you ..... (receive) them.
- 5 I'll ask him for a decision when the meeting ..... (finish).

- 6 When we ..... (launch) the MC30, it was a total innovation.
- 7 When they ..... (build) the factory, they had to install the equipment.
- 8 While I ..... (try) to write the letter, people kept interrupting me.
- 9 He didn't get to the bank until after it ..... (close).
- 10 We'll have a team meeting when everyone ..... (come) back from holiday.

See also page 48.

### The second conditional

- The second conditional is formed by:  
*If/Unless + past simple tense, + would/could/might + infinitive*  
*If I **lost** my job, I **might start** my own business.*
- The second conditional talks about imaginary, improbable or hypothetical situations (unlike the first conditional (see page 45), which talks about real possibilities). Compare:  
*I hear the company is going to open an office in Thailand. If they **send** me to work in Thailand, I'll **be delighted**.* (first conditional)  
*If I **was** managing director, I **wouldn't send** you to Thailand!* (second conditional)
- The second conditional is often used to give advice, using the phrase *If I were you ...*:  
*If I were you, I would ask my family to help me start the business.*
- As with the first conditional, the *if*-clause can come first or second in the sentence:  
*I might start my own business if I lost my job.*

#### 1 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense.

- 1 I would take out a loan if interest rates *weren't* (not be) so high.
- 2 I ..... (start) up a business if it wasn't so risky.
- 3 I'd stay in this job if they ..... (pay) more.
- 4 I ..... (can/work) in the Paris office if I spoke French.
- 5 I ..... (take) that job if I were you.

## 2 Complete these sentences in any way you want.

- 1 If I spoke perfect English, ...
- 2 I wouldn't work so hard if ...
- 3 If they don't give me promotion, ...
- 4 If I started my own business, ...
- 5 If I needed money to start a business, ...
- 6 I'll study another language if ...

## Comparing and contrasting ideas

- *Although* joins two sentences:  
**Although** he left school at 16, he was a millionaire by the age of 30.
- *However* and *on the other hand* are adverbs and normally start new sentences:  
He was a lazy student. **However**, he became a hard-working and successful businessman.  
The risks are very high. **On the other hand**, the potential profit is enormous.
- *In spite of* and *despite* are followed by nouns or *-ing* forms:  
**In spite of** the risks, they decided to go it alone.  
**Despite** working very hard, their business was never very profitable.

## 1 Complete these sentences with *although*, *however*, *on the other hand*, *in spite of* or *despite*.

- 1 I asked for a loan *although* interest rates were high.
- 2 ..... we met our sales targets, my manager was not satisfied.
- 3 ..... high interest rates, he took out a loan.
- 4 The world economic situation was bad. ...., the firm decided to expand.
- 5 He has original ideas. ...., he's bad at putting them into practice.
- 6 ..... the meeting lasted three hours, they were unable to reach a decision.
- 7 He couldn't convince them to buy the new machine ..... he tried very hard.
- 8 He finds his job very stressful ..... doing a stress-management course.
- 9 ..... I tidy my desk every day, it always ends up covered in papers.

## 2 Complete these sentences about yourself. Then compare your answers with a partner.

- 1 I am successful despite ...
- 2 I've made progress learning English, although ...
- 3 Although I enjoy some aspects of my work, ...
- 4 In spite of working hard, I ...
- 5 Money is important to me. On the other hand, ...
- 6 I like the town where I live, in spite of ...

## Modal verbs

To express these meanings, you can use modal verbs.

- **perhaps: *may/might***  
You should make a back-up copy because the computer **might** have a virus.
- **able to: *can***  
He's a brilliant presenter because he **can** hold everything he wants to say in his head without looking at notes.
- **it's obligatory/essential: *must* or *have to***
  - *must* for an obligation the speaker agrees with:  
You **must** help me write this report because I can't do it on my own.
  - *have to* for an obligation from someone else:  
I'm afraid I **have to** work late at the office tonight – my boss wants the report finished by tomorrow lunchtime.
- **it's a good idea/advisable: *should* / *ought to***  
If you think you've got too much work, you **should** speak to your boss. He **ought to** take on an assistant to help you.
- **it is generally likely: *can***  
Speakers who just read from their notes **can** be very boring.
- **it is allowed: *may/can***  
In this company, you **can** wear jeans and a T-shirt on Fridays.

Rewrite these sentences about giving presentations using one of the modal verbs above.

- 1 I advise you to rehearse your presentation before you give it.  
*You should rehearse your presentation before you give it.*
- 2 It's a good idea to put complicated details on a handout.  
.....
- 3 It's essential to speak loudly and clearly so that everyone can hear you.  
.....
- 4 Giving presentations to senior managers is generally likely to be very frightening.  
.....
- 5 You are allowed to pause to drink water if your mouth is dry.  
.....
- 6 Perhaps people will interrupt your presentation with questions.  
.....
- 7 You are allowed to tell them to save questions till the end.  
.....