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## CONDITIONAL CLAUSES IN GREEK

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Greek deals with conditionals in a less straightforward way than Latin, but it becomes more intelligible if one uses the division of:

- **FUTURE** conditions
  - **PAST & PRESENT** ones.
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### FUTURE REAL

Protasis: **ἐάν** with subjunctive. Apodosis: indicative.

**ἐάν** λάβῃς τὴν Δεκελείαν, μέγας βλάψῃς τοὺς Ἀθηναίους.  
If you capture Decelea, you will greatly harm the Athenians.

### FUTURE IMAGINARY

Protasis: **εἰ** with optative. Apodosis: optative with **ἄν**

**εἰ** λάβοις τὴν Δεκελείαν, μέγας **ἄν** βλάψῃς τοὺς Ἀθηναίους.  
If you were to capture Decelea, you would greatly harm the Athenians.

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### PAST & PRESENT

Both PAST and PRESENT use the **INDICATIVE**, whether they are real or imaginary. What distinguishes an **imaginary** condition from a real one is the use of **ἄν** in the apodosis.

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#### PAST REAL

**εἰ** σὺ τήμερον εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἦλθες, εἶδες τὸν Περικλέα.  
If you went to the Assembly today, you saw Pericles.

#### PAST IMAGINARY

**εἰ** σὺ τήμερον εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἦλθες, εἶδες **ἄν** τὸν Περικλέα.  
If you had gone to the Assembly today, you would have seen Pericles.

*Both of the past conditionals tend to use the aorist.*

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#### PRESENT REAL

**εἰ** ὁ Γοργίας διδάσκει ἔτι Ἀθήνησι, κινδυνεύει.  
If Gorgias is still teaching at Athens, he is at risk.

#### PRESENT IMAGINARY

**εἰ** ὁ Γοργίας ἐδίδασκεν ἔτι Ἀθήνησιν, ἐκινδυνεύεν **ἄν**.  
If Gorgias were still teaching at Athens, he would be at risk.

*For the present imaginary, the tenses slip into the imperfect.*

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## NOTES

- A conditional can be a mixture of tenses:  
**εἰ** μὴ ἐξεβάλετε τὸν Ἀλκιβιάδην, οὐκ ἂν νῦν τοιαῦτα κακὰ ἐπάσχετε.  
If you had not banished Alcibiades, you would not now be suffering such hardships.
- This example also illustrates the general rule that the protasis uses **μὴ**, and the apodosis **οὐ**.
- The apodosis can also be a command, a wish, or a question.
- Occasionally a *future real conditional* is done with straightforward indicative verbs, Latin style: this is when a threat or warning is intended:  
**εἰ** κλέψῃς, δίκην δώσεις—if you steal you will be punished.
- **ἐάν** appears as **ἦν** in Thucydides and in the Ionic of the tragedians; and Plato often spells it **ἄν**.