

**A****unless**

Study this example situation:

The club is for members only.

You can't go in **unless you are a member**.

This means:

You can't go in *except if* you are a member.

You can go in *only if* you are a member.

**unless** = except if



Some more examples of **unless**:

- ☐ I'll see you tomorrow **unless I have to work late**.  
(= except if I have to work late)
- ☐ There are no buses to the beach. **Unless you have a car**, it's difficult to get there.  
(= except if you have a car)
- ☐ A: Shall I tell Lisa what happened?  
B: **Not unless** she asks you. (= tell her only if she asks you)
- ☐ Ben hates to complain. He wouldn't complain about something **unless it was really bad**.  
(= except if it was really bad)
- ☐ We can take a taxi to the restaurant – **unless you'd prefer to walk**. (= except if you'd prefer to walk)

Instead of **unless** it is often possible to say **if ... not**:

- ☐ **Unless we leave now**, we'll be late. *or* **If we don't leave now**, we'll ...

**B****as long as / so long as and provided / providing**

You can say **as long as** or **so long as** (= if, on condition that):

- ☐ You can borrow my car  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{as long as} \\ \text{so long as} \end{array} \right\}$  you promise not to drive too fast.  
(= You can borrow my car, but you must promise not to drive too fast. This is a condition.)

You can also say **provided (that)** or **providing (that)**:

- ☐ Travelling by car is convenient  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{provided (that)} \\ \text{providing (that)} \end{array} \right\}$  you have somewhere to park.  
(= It's convenient but only if you have somewhere to park.)
- ☐  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Providing (that)} \\ \text{Provided (that)} \end{array} \right\}$  the room is clean, I don't mind which hotel we stay at.  
(= The room must be clean, but otherwise I don't mind.)

**C****unless / as long as etc. for the future**

When we are talking about the future, we do *not* use **will** after **unless / as long as / so long as / provided / providing**. We use a *present* tense (see Unit 25):

- ☐ I'm not going out **unless it stops** raining. (*not* unless it will stop)
- ☐ **Providing** the weather **is** good, we're going to have a picnic tomorrow.  
(*not* providing the weather will be good)

# Exercises

## 115.1 Write a new sentence with the same meaning. Use **unless** in your sentence.

- 1 You must try a bit harder, or you won't pass the exam.  
*You won't pass the exam unless you try a bit harder.*
- 2 Listen carefully, or you won't know what to do.  
You won't know what to do .....
- 3 She must apologise to me, or I'll never speak to her again.  
.....
- 4 You have to speak very slowly, or he won't understand you.  
.....
- 5 Business must improve soon, or the company will have to close.  
.....
- 6 We need to do something soon, or the problem will get worse.  
.....

## 115.2 Write sentences with **unless**.

- 1 The club isn't open to everyone. You're allowed in only if you're a member.  
*You aren't allowed in the club unless you're a member.*
- 2 I don't want to go to the party alone. I'm going only if you go too.  
I'm not going .....
- 3 Don't worry about the dog. It will chase you only if you move suddenly.  
The dog .....
- 4 Ben isn't very talkative. He'll speak to you only if you ask him something.  
Ben .....
- 5 Today is a public holiday. The doctor will see you only if it's an emergency.  
The doctor .....

## 115.3 Which is correct?

- 1 You can borrow my car unless / as long as you promise not to drive too fast.  
(as long as is correct)
- 2 We're going to the beach tomorrow unless / providing the weather is bad.
- 3 We're going to the beach tomorrow unless / providing the weather is good.
- 4 I don't mind if you come home late unless / as long as you come in quietly.
- 5 I'm going now unless / provided you want me to stay.
- 6 I don't watch TV unless / as long as I have nothing else to do.
- 7 Children are allowed to use the swimming pool unless / provided they are with an adult.
- 8 Unless / Provided they are with an adult, children are not allowed to use the swimming pool.
- 9 We can sit here in the corner unless / as long as you'd rather sit by the window.
- 10 A: Our holiday cost a lot of money.  
B: Did it? Well, that doesn't matter unless / as long as you enjoyed yourselves.

## 115.4 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences.

- 1 We'll be late unless *we take a taxi.*
- 2 I like hot weather as long as .....
- 3 It takes 20 minutes to drive to the airport provided .....
- 4 I don't mind walking home as long as .....
- 5 I like to walk to work in the morning unless .....
- 6 We can meet tomorrow unless .....
- 7 I'll lend you the money providing .....
- 8 I'll tell you a secret as long as .....
- 9 You won't achieve anything unless .....