Conditionals

The term *conditional* refers to a sentence (or part of sentence) with an *if* statement. The *if* part is known as the *protasis*; the main clause is the *apodosis*. In the sentence, "If she joins our team, we will win," the part before the comma is the *protasis*, and the part after the comma is the *apodosis.*

The protasis may be introduced by a temporal adverb or relative pronoun instead of *if.* Thus, "When she joins our team, we will win" is a temporal conditional.

There are certain tense/mood combinations that predominate in Greek (as in English), and that's what the chart below tries to encapsulate. But other possibilities do occur— which grammarians call "mixed conditions."

1. **SIMPLE**. This is the term for conditions where both the protasis and apodosis are in the indicative. Refers to factual statements. Simple.
2. **GENERALIZING OR INDEFINITE**. This is the construction when the *protasis* refers to something indefinite, or habitual, or a general truth (*if ever…*). This is already familiar to us from temporal and relative clauses. As you'll expect, the subjunctive + ἄν is used except when the main clause is in the past, in which case the optative is used (without ἄν). When the main clause is in the future, the English translation shifts a bit and grammarians like to use the term "Future More Vivid."
3. **CONTRARY TO FACT AND FUTURE LESS VIVID**. These are conditions that shift far away from the here and now. All three use ἄν in the main clause, with either a past tense (contrary to fact) or an optative (future less vivid). You'll recognize that the main clause of the Future Less Vivid (the *should-would* condition) is familiar to us already, as a potential optative.

TYPE	TIME	PROTASIS (IF CLAUSE)	APODOSIS (MAIN CLAUSE)
SIMPLE	Present	εἰ + pres./perf.indicative *if … does*	pres./perf. indicative *does*
	Past	εἰ + impf/aor/plpf. indic. *if … did/was doing*	impf/aor/plperf. indic. *did/was doing*
	Future	εἰ + future indic. *if … does*	future indic. *will do*
GENERALIZING OR INDEFINITE	Present	ἐάν + subjunctive *if ever … does*	pres. indicative *does*
	Past	εἰ + optative *if ever … did*	impf. indic. did
	Future	ἐάν + subjunctive *if … does*	future indic. *will do*
CONTRARY TO FACT	Present	εἰ + impf indic. *if … were doing*	impf. indic. + ἄν *would be doing*
	Past	εἰ + aor. indic. *if … had done*	aor. indic. + ἄν *would have done*
FUTURE LESS VIVID (should-would)	Future	εἰ + optative *if … should do*	optative + ἄν would do