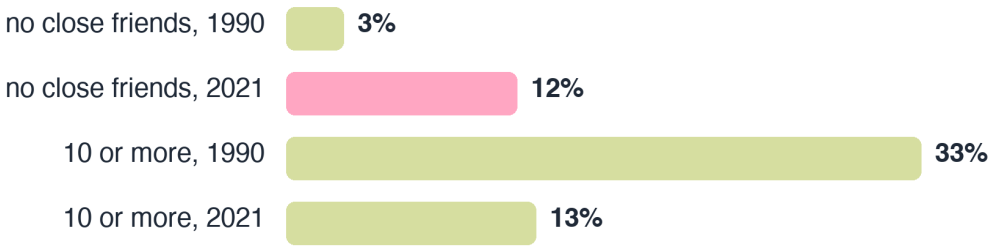
FIRST CONDITIONAL · SONG WORKSHEET

Who would you call at 3 a.m.?

In 1990, only 3 in 100 American adults said they had no close friends. By 2021 it was 12 in 100, four times as many.



Gallup 1990 and Survey Center on American Life 2021, adults in the US.

Fewer people now have a big group of close friends. So the few friends we have matter more, and so do the promises we make them.

Meet the song

Count on Me · Bruno Mars, 2010

From his first album, *Doo-Wops & Hooligans*. The whole song is a list of promises to a friend: whatever happens, I'll be there.

A promise about a possible future is the job of the first conditional.



Photo: Bruno Mars by Brothers Le, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons, cropped.

Listen and read

Watch the **official lyric video** on Bruno Mars's YouTube channel (search *Bruno Mars Count on Me official lyric video*).

Where to look	What to find
Verse 1	Two promises that start with *If you ever ...* and end with *I'll ...*
Before the chorus	One line that starts with *When*, about helping friends.
The chorus	*I'll* and *you'll*: what each friend will do.
Verse 2	Two more *if* promises. Are the verbs after *if* present or future?

Take a promise apart

The condition	The promise
If you need help,	I'll be there.
If you ever feel lost,	I'll call you every day.
When you get home,	I'll send you the photos.
present simple	**will ('ll) + verb**

You can swap the halves: I'll be there if you need help. No comma then.

If or when?

1. **If** = it might happen. *If you miss the bus, I'll drive you.*
2. **When** = you're sure it will happen. *When you arrive, I'll open the door.*
3. **Unless** = if not. *I'll come unless it rains = I'll come if it doesn't rain.*
4. **Never will after if or when.** *If you need me*, not *If you will need me*.

Song titles and artist names are used for identification only. esl.laboratory is not affiliated with or endorsed by the artists or their labels.

Practice

Exercise 1
Watch the lyric video and answer.

1. In verse 1, how many promises start with *If you ever*? _____
2. The line before the chorus starts with **If** / **When**.
3. In the chorus, the singer says *I'll* = I **would** / **will**.
4. In verse 2, the verbs after *if* are in the **present** / **future**.

Exercise 2
Join each condition to its promise.

1. If you lose your keys, _____	A. I'll bring cake.
2. If you're sad on your birthday, _____	B. I'll come and pick you up.
3. When you move house, _____	C. we'll celebrate.
4. If your car breaks down, _____	D. you can stay at my place.
5. When you get the job, _____	E. I'll help you carry the boxes.

Exercise 3
Complete with *if* or *when* and the verb in brackets.

1. I'll text you _____ I _____ (get) home tonight.
2. _____ you need a lift, I _____ (drive) you.
3. We'll start dinner _____ Anna _____ (arrive).
4. _____ you don't hurry, you _____ (miss) the bus.
5. If he _____ (not feel) better, he _____ (stay) at home.
6. _____ I turn 30, I _____ (throw) a big party.

Exercise 4
Rewrite with *unless*.

1. If you don't hurry, you'll miss the train.
   _____
2. I'll come if it doesn't rain.
   _____
3. If she doesn't call, I won't go.
   _____

Exercise 5
A promise chain. Finish each promise.

1. If you ever feel lonely,
   _____
2. If you ever forget your lines,
   _____
3. When you're old and grey,
   _____

Exercise 6
Each sentence has one mistake. Write it correctly.

1. If you will need me, I'll be there.
   _____
2. When I'll get home, I'll call you.
   _____
3. If it rains, we stay at home tomorrow.
   _____
4. Unless you don't hurry, you'll be late.
   _____

Exercise 7
Write a short message to a friend with three promises (40 to 60 words).

ESL LAB