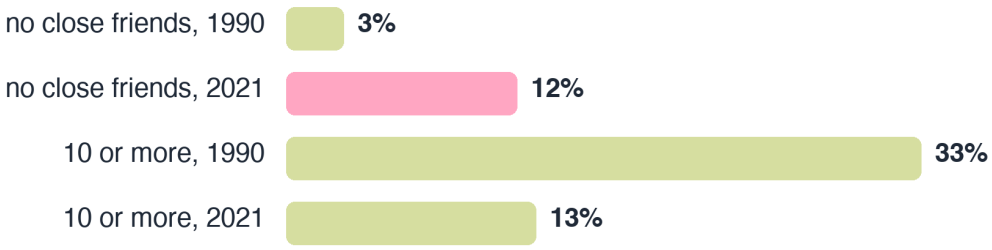
FIRST CONDITIONAL · SONG WORKSHEET

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.

Teacher's notes: questions students ask

They ask	You answer
It's about the future. Why not will after if?	In English the *if* part keeps the present. *Will* goes in the result only.
Can I start with the promise?	Yes: *I'll call you if I'm late.* Drop the comma when *if* comes second.
What's the difference between if and when?	*When* is certain, *if* is possible. *When I get home* (I will). *If I get home early* (maybe).
Is unless the same as if not?	Yes, almost always. *Unless you hurry = if you don't hurry*.

How to use the video

Play it once with no task. On the second play, pause after verse 1 and after the chorus for Exercise 1. The lyric video is the only one of the five song sheets with lyrics on the artist's own channel.

Practice

Exercise 1
Watch the lyric video and answer.

1. In verse 1, how many promises start with *If you ever*? **two**
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, **d**	A. I'll bring cake.
2. If you're sad on your birthday, **a**	B. I'll come and pick you up.
3. When you move house, **e**	C. we'll celebrate.
4. If your car breaks down, **b**	D. you can stay at my place.
5. When you get the job, **c**	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 **when** I **get** (get) home tonight.
2. **If** you need a lift, I **'ll drive** (drive) you.
3. We'll start dinner **when** Anna **arrives** (arrive).
4. **If** you don't hurry, you **'ll miss** (miss) the bus.
5. If he **doesn't feel** (not feel) better, he **'ll stay** (stay) at home.
6. **When** I turn 30, I **'ll throw** (throw) a big party.

Exercise 4
Rewrite with *unless*.

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

Exercise 5
A promise chain. Finish each promise.

1. If you ever feel lonely,
   Example: If you ever feel lonely, I'll come over with pizza.
2. If you ever forget your lines,
   Example: If you ever forget your lines, I'll whisper them.
3. When you're old and grey,
   Example: When you're old and grey, I'll still visit you.

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

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

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

Example: *Hi Sam, good luck with the move! If you need help on Saturday, I'll bring my car. When you finish unpacking, we'll go for dinner, my treat. And if you ever feel homesick, I'll call you every evening. Count on me!*