HSK 5 Grammar 15: If" statements

HSK 5 假如, 万一 and 的话 for conditions, taught from the reviewed topic handout; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Three ways to say ‘if’

Marker	Tone	Example
假如 …… ，就 ……	deliberate, often formal	假如我有更多时间，我就把报告写得更清楚。
万一 …… 怎么办？	a slim but worrying chance	万一把护照忘在酒店怎么办？
…… 的话，……	soft and spoken	你今晚有空的话，我们一起去看电影吧。

Use the evidence

All three set a condition. Tone, likelihood and the marker’s position are what change.

假如 …… ， 就 ……: suppose

1. **The frame** 假如 + statement ， 就 + result. 假 suggests 'suppose'.
2. **An unreal condition** 假如我有更多时间，我就把这份报告写得更清楚。If I had more time, I would write it more clearly.
3. **An undecided condition** 假如公司同意远程办公，很多同事就不用每天挤地铁了。

Decision

如果 and 要是 are the everyday choices; 假如 leans formal, at home in articles, proposals and speeches.

万一: one in ten thousand

Worry — 万一 …… 怎么办？

出门前再检查一下护照，万一把它忘在酒店怎么办？

What if you left it at the hotel?

Precaution — 万一 …… ，backup

我多存了一份文件，万一电脑突然坏了，数据也不会丢。

In case the computer breaks, the data is safe.

When is it 万一?

1. **Slim chance of trouble** 带上转换插头，万一插座不一样呢？Worth preparing for.
2. **Ordinary, likely chance** 下雨的话，我们就在家做饭。Likely rain simply moves the plan.
3. **The test** Does the chance feel tiny, and is the result unwelcome? Then 万一.

Decision

如果 can carry bad news too; the extra force of 万一 is that the chance feels tiny.

的话: the closing bracket

1. **The frame** (如果 or 要是 +) condition + 的话，result.
2. **Bare condition** 你今晚有空的话，我们一起去看那部新电影吧。
3. **With 如果 and 就**如果价格还是太高的话，就等打折再买。
4. **Wrong places** 的话 inside the result, or before the condition, is wrong.

Decision

的话 closes the condition; 就, if used, stays with the result.

Your turn: which if?

Your turn

Chatting with a roommate: rain is likely, and the plan is simply to cook at home. Which sentence fits best?

A. 下雨的话，我们就在家做饭。
B. 万一下雨，菜就买不到了怎么办？
C. 假如明天下雨，会议就改到上午。

Your turn: where does 的话 go?

Your turn

Which sentence puts the spoken 'if' marker in the right place?

A. 你觉得冷的话，就把窗户关上。
B. 你觉得冷，就把窗户的话关上。
C. 的话你觉得冷，就把窗户关上。

Answers: tone and place

1. **The roommate chat** 下雨的话，我们就在家做饭。Spoken, likely, no emergency.
2. **The window** 你觉得冷的话，就把窗户关上。的话 closes the condition.
3. **The quiet office** 假如办公室安静一点，我今天就能写完这份计划。
4. **The last bus** 万一你错过了末班车怎么办？

Decision

The 万一 option in the first item worries about food; the 假如 option moves a formal meeting.

Check yourself

Your turn

You pack an umbrella in case the weather suddenly changes. Which sentence fits?

A. 带把伞吧，万一突然下雨呢？
B. 带把伞吧，假如下雨的话就下雨。
C. 万一带把伞，突然下雨怎么办？