

Unless and until – Learn the difference

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Introduction:

In English language, there are many confusing words where we all get puzzled. We have done most of these in our previous articles. Today we will discuss another confusing pair "until" and "unless".

Until and **Unless** are generally used as a conjunction to connect the sentences in English. These can also be used as a preposition. Let's learn the usage of **until** and **unless**.

Unless:

Unless means same, as *if... not*. Unless is followed by a present tense, past tense or past perfect tense. Unless is used instead of '*if... not*' in conditional sentence of all types. The order of clause doesn't matter with a sentence using unless.

Unless + present tense

Using "*if*":

If you don't study properly and diligently, you will never understand economics.

Using "*unless*":

Unless you study properly and diligently, you will never understand economics.

Unless + past tense

Using "*if*":

She would be here by now *if* she wasn't stuck in traffic.

Using "*unless*":

She would be here by now *unless* she was stuck in traffic.

Unless + past perfect tense

Using "*if*":

Our director would not have signed the contract *if* she hadn't had a lawyer present.

Using "*unless*":

Our director would not have signed the contract *unless* she hadn't had a lawyer present.

Example:

1. I shall not lend you money "unless" you give me gold.
2. He will not come to your home "unless" you go to his.
3. The bank will not provide you loan "unless" you show them your original identities.
4. He will not trust you "unless" you prove yourself.

Until & Unless

Until:

Until is used up to the particular time, and is already considered a negative form in connectors, so don't use 'not' with until in a sentence.

Usage:

Compare "until", "to", and "by".

The word "until" is used in expressions of time to mean "the time up to"

Example: To finish the work until 8 PM, she stayed inside the cabin the entire day.

The word "to" can be used like "until" with expressions of time with from

Example: They worked from morning until nine in the night.

We use "by", not "until", when referring to an action that will occur no later than a future time

Example: Will the hot water be turned back on by tomorrow?

To refer to a continuing state that stops at a certain time, we use "until"

Example: You'll have to wait until next week for the hot water.

Examples:

1. Wait here "until" I come back.
2. "Until" I complete the homework, please don't switch-on the T.V.
3. You have to wait "until" the next train arrives.
4. They did not come "until" the meeting was half over.
5. He read "until" his guests arrived.

Conclusion:

English has many complicated things to learn. Practice and knowledge about the words may help you to understand the difference. Stay tuned for more blogs to improve your [spoken English skills](#).

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-By Chander Madan

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