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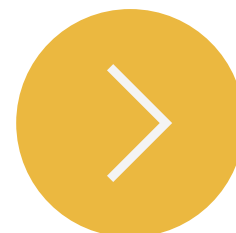
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SENT. STRUCTURE L 9.8B – TEMPORAL CLAUSES (WENN OR ALS?)

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Video Lesson:

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"WENN" OR "ALS"?

"Wenn" and "als" both express that two things occurred simultaneously at a specific point in time.

We use "als" for something that occurred once in the past.

In the future and present, we always use "wenn".

"Wenn" is also used when something has happened more than once in the past.

In The Future

In the future: always "wenn".

- „Ich werde immer glücklich sein, **wenn** du mich **besuchst**.“
→ Each time
- „Ich werde froh sein, **wenn** du gesund wieder **zurückkommst**.“
→ Occurs just once

**ATTENTION**

"Wenn" can be seen as a condition (conditional clause) or a point in time (temporal clause), depending on the context of the sentence

Present Tense

In the present tense: always "wenn".

- „Ich komme nach Hause, **wenn** ich mit der Arbeit fertig **bin**.“
→ Once
- „(Immer) **wenn** ich nach Hause **laufe**, komme ich am Kino vorbei.“
→ Often (again and again)

**ATTENTION**

"Wenn" can be a condition as well, depending on the focus of the sentence.

In The Past

When speaking about the past, you have to choose between "wenn" and "als".

- „**Als** ich ein Kind **war**, habe ich hier immer Fußball gespielt.“
→ I was a child only once. → als
- „(Immer) **wenn** ich in Berlin **war**, sind wir feiern gewesen.“
→ I partied in Berlin more than once. → wenn
- „Heute bin ich schon im Büro gewesen, **als** du angekommen **bist**.“
→ Today, you arrived at the office only once. → als

SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Subordinate clauses beginning with "wenn" or "als" can also stand-alone without being connected to a main clause. This only works when the question is clear.

- „**Wann** kommst du nach Hause?“
„**Wenn** ich mit der Arbeit fertig bin.“
- „**Wann** hast du dich mit Tim getroffen?“
„**Als** ich in Berlin war.“

SUMMARY

Time	Wenn or als?
Future	Always "wenn"
Present	Always "wenn"
Past	Once – "als" More than once – "wenn"

If there's no question, the subordinate clause usually comes before the main clause. If you can answer the question about when something occurred, the subordinate clause can stand alone.

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