

In case

A

Study this example situation:



Your car should have a spare wheel because it is possible you will have a puncture.

Your car should have a spare wheel **in case** you have a puncture.

In case you have a puncture = because it is possible you will have a puncture.

Some more examples of **in case**:

- I'll leave my mobile phone switched on **in case Jane calls**. (= because it is possible she will call)
- I'll draw a map for you **in case you have problems finding our house**. (= because it is possible you will have problems)
- I'll remind them about the meeting **in case they've forgotten**. (= because it is possible they have forgotten)

We use **just in case** for a smaller possibility:

- I don't think it will rain, but I'll take an umbrella **just in case**. (= **just in case** it rains)

Do not use **will** after **in case**. Use a present tense for the future (see **Unit 25**):

- I'll leave my phone switched on **in case Jane calls**. (*not* in case Jane will call)

B

In case is not the same as **if**. We use **in case** to say *why* somebody does (or doesn't do) something. You do something *now* **in case** something happens *later*.

Compare:

in case

- We'll buy some more food **in case** Tom comes.
(= Maybe Tom will come. We'll buy some more food now, whether he comes or not; then we'll *already* have the food *if* he comes.)
- I'll give you my phone number **in case** you need to contact me.
- You should insure your bike **in case** it is stolen.

if

- We'll buy some more food **if** Tom comes.
(= Maybe Tom will come. *If* he comes, we'll buy some more food; *if* he doesn't come, we won't buy any more food.)
- You can call me on this number **if** you need to contact me.
- You should inform the police **if** your bike is stolen.

C

You can use **in case** + *past* to say why somebody did something:

- I left my phone switched on **in case Jane called**. (= because it was possible that Jane would call)
- I drew a map for Sarah **in case she had problems finding the house**.
- We rang the doorbell again **in case they hadn't heard it the first time**.

D

In case of is not the same as **in case**. **In case of** ... = if there is ... (especially on notices etc.):

- In case of fire**, please leave the building as quickly as possible. (= if there is a fire)
- In case of emergency**, call this number. (= if there is an emergency)

114.1 Sophie is going for a long walk in the country. You think she should take:

~~some chocolate~~ a map an anorak a camera some water

You think she should take these things because:

it's possible she'll get lost ~~she might get hungry~~
 perhaps she'll be thirsty maybe it will rain
 she might want to take some pictures

What do you say to Sophie? Write sentences with **in case**.

- 1 Take some chocolate in case you get hungry.
- 2 Take
- 3
- 4
- 5

114.2 What do you say in these situations? Use **in case**.

- 1 It's possible that Jane will need to contact you, so you agree to give her your phone number.
 You say: I'll give you my phone number in case you need to contact me.
- 2 A friend of yours is going away for a long time. Maybe you won't see her again before she goes, so you decide to say goodbye now.
 You say: I'll say goodbye now
- 3 You are shopping in a supermarket with a friend. You think you have everything you need, but maybe you forgot something. Your friend has the list. You ask her to check it.
 You say: Can you
- 4 You advise a friend about using a computer. You think he should back up (= copy) his files because maybe there will be a problem with his computer (and he could lose all his data).
 You say: You should back up

114.3 Complete the sentences using **in case**.

- 1 There was a possibility that Jane would call. So I left my phone switched on.
 I left my phone switched on in case Jane called.
- 2 I thought that I might forget the name of the book. So I wrote it down.
 I wrote down the name of the book
- 3 I thought my parents might be worried about me. So I phoned them.
 I phoned my parents
- 4 I sent an email to Lisa, but she didn't reply. So I sent another email because maybe she didn't get the first one.
 I sent her another email
- 5 I met some people when I was on holiday in France. They said they might come to London one day. I live in London, so I gave them my phone number.
 I gave them my phone number

114.4 Put in **in case** or **if**.

- 1 I'll draw a map for you in case you have problems finding our house.
- 2 You should tell the police if you have any information about the crime.
- 3 I hope you'll come to Australia sometime. you come, you must visit us.
- 4 This book belongs to Susan. Can you give it to her you see her?
- 5 Write your name and phone number on your bag you lose it.
- 6 Go to the lost property office you lose your bag.
- 7 The burglar alarm will ring somebody tries to break into the house.
- 8 You should lock your bike to something somebody tries to steal it.
- 9 I was advised to get insurance I needed medical treatment while I was abroad.