

# Wish

A

You can say 'I wish you luck / every success / a happy birthday' etc. :

- I wish you every success in the future.
- I saw Tim before the exam and he wished me luck.

We say 'wish somebody something' (luck / a happy birthday etc.). But you cannot 'wish that something happens'. We use **hope** in this situation. For example:

- I hope you get this letter before you go away. (not I wish you get)

Compare I wish and I hope:

- I wish you a pleasant stay here.
- I hope you have a pleasant stay here. (not I wish you have)

B

We also use **wish** to say that we regret something, that something is not as we would like it. When we use **wish** in this way, we use the *past* (knew/lived etc.), but the meaning is *present*:

- I wish I knew what to do about the problem. (I don't know and I regret this)
- I wish you didn't have to go so soon. (you have to go)
- Do you wish you lived near the sea? (you don't live near the sea)
- Jack's going on a trip to Mexico soon. I wish I was going too. (I'm not going)

To say that we regret something in the past, we use **wish + had ... (had known / had said)** etc. :

- I wish I'd known about the party. I would have gone if I'd known. (I didn't know)
- It was a stupid thing to say. I wish I hadn't said it. (I said it)

For more examples, see Units 39 and 40.

C

I wish I could (do something) = I regret that I cannot do it:

- I'm sorry I have to go. I wish I could stay longer. (but I can't)
- I've met that man before. I wish I could remember his name. (but I can't)

I wish I could have (done something) = I regret that I could not do it:

- I hear the party was great. I wish I could have gone. (but I couldn't go)

D

You can say 'I wish (somebody) would (do something)'. For example:

I wish it would stop raining.



It's been raining all day. Jill doesn't like it. She says:  
I wish it would stop raining.

Jill would like the rain to stop, but this will probably not happen.

We use I wish ... would when we would like something to happen or change. Usually, the speaker doesn't expect this to happen.

We often use I wish ... would to complain about a situation:

- The phone has been ringing for five minutes. I wish somebody would answer it.
- I wish you would do something instead of just sitting and doing nothing.

You can use I wish ... wouldn't ... to complain about things that people do repeatedly:

- I wish you wouldn't keep interrupting me.

We use I wish ... would ... for actions and changes, *not* situations. Compare:

- I wish Sarah would come. (= I want her to come)
- but I wish Sarah was (or were) here now. (not I wish Sarah would be)
- I wish somebody would buy me a car.
- but I wish I had a car. (not I wish I would have)

41.1 Put in wish(ed) or hope(d).

- 1 I wish you a pleasant stay here.
- 2 Enjoy your holiday. I hope you have a great time.
- 3 Goodbye. I wish you all the best.
- 4 We said goodbye to each other and wished each other luck.
- 5 We're going to have a picnic tomorrow, so I hope the weather is nice.
- 6 I hope you luck in your new job. I hope it works out well for you.

41.2 What do you say in these situations? Write sentences with I wish ... would ...

- 1 It's raining. You want to go out, but not in the rain.  
You say: I wish it would stop raining.
- 2 You're waiting for Jane. She's late and you're getting impatient.  
You say to yourself: I wish she would come.
- 3 You're looking for a job – so far without success. Nobody will give you a job.  
You say: I wish somebody would give me a job.
- 4 You can hear a baby crying. It's been crying for a long time and you're trying to study.  
You say: I wish the baby would stop crying.
- 5 Brian has been wearing the same clothes for years. You think he needs some new clothes.  
You say to Brian: I wish you would buy some new clothes.

For the following situations, write sentences with I wish ... wouldn't ...

- 6 Your friend drives very fast. You don't like this.  
You say to your friend: I wish you wouldn't drive so fast.
- 7 Joe leaves the door open all the time. This annoys you.  
You say to Joe: I wish you would close the door.
- 8 A lot of people drop litter in the street. You don't like this.  
You say: I wish people wouldn't drop litter.

41.3 Are these sentences right or wrong? Correct them where necessary.

- 1 I wish Sarah would be here now. I wish Sarah were here now.
- 2 I wish you would listen to me. I wish you would listen to me.
- 3 I wish I would have more free time. I wish I had more free time.
- 4 I wish our flat would be a bit bigger. I wish our flat were a bit bigger.
- 5 I wish the weather would change. I wish the weather would change.
- 6 I wish you wouldn't complain all the time. I wish you wouldn't complain all the time.
- 7 I wish everything wouldn't be so expensive. I wish everything wouldn't be so expensive.

41.4 Put the verb into the correct form.

- 1 It was a stupid thing to say. I wish I hadn't said it. (I / not / say)
- 2 I'm fed up with this rain. I wish it would stop. (it / stop)
- 3 It's a difficult question. I wish you would answer the answer. (I / know)
- 4 I should have listened to you. I wish you would listen your advice. (I / take)
- 5 You're lucky to be going away. I wish you would go with you. (I / can / come)
- 6 I have no energy at the moment. I wish I would have energy so tired. (I / not / be)
- 7 Aren't they ready yet? I wish they would hurry up. (they / hurry)
- 8 It would be nice to stay here longer. I wish we would stay to leave now.  
(we / not / have)
- 9 When we were in London last year, we didn't have time to see all the things we wanted to see.  
I wish we had had more time longer. (we / can / stay)
- 10 It's freezing today. I wish it weren't so cold so cold. I hate cold weather. (it / not / be)
- 11 Joe still doesn't know what he wants to do. I wish he would decide. (he / decide)
- 12 I really didn't enjoy the party. I wish I had enjoyed it. (we / not / go)