

wish

We use the verb *wish* to talk about situations which are not real, but which we would like to be real.

We use *wish* with different tenses and modals depending on what we want to say.

Use	Tense / modal	Example
To express wishes about now or generally	wish + past simple	Carl wishes he had a telescope. I wish I wasn't scared of spiders.
To express wishes about the past	wish + past perfect simple	Tracy wishes she'd seen that programme about the moon last night. I wish they hadn't cut down so many trees.
To criticise other people, or to complain about something	wish + would + bare infinitive	I wish people would throw their litter in the bin and not on the ground! I wish you wouldn't smoke in here.
To express wishes about ability and permission now or in the future	wish + could + bare infinitive	I wish I could travel through time! David wishes he could come with us, but his parents won't let him.

Helpful hints

- When we use *wish* + past simple, we can say *I/he/she/it was ...* or *I/he/she/it were ...* *Were* is more formal than *was*.
✓ I wish I **was** an astronaut. (more informal)
✓ I wish I **were** an astronaut. (more formal)
- We can use the phrase *if only* in the same way as *wish*.
✓ If only I **was/were** an astronaut.

Watch out!

- We don't use *would* for wishes about ourselves.
✓ I wish I **lived** on Mars.
✗ I wish I **would live** on Mars.
- We use *wish* for situations that aren't real. If there is a possibility that something will happen in the future, we don't use *wish*, but we can use *hope*.
✓ I **hope** it doesn't snow tomorrow.
✗ I **wish** it doesn't snow tomorrow.

A Complete using the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

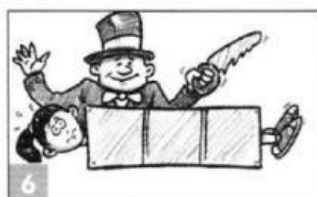
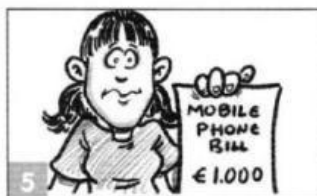
- 1 I wish I (**have**) a million euros! I'd buy lots of great things.
- 2 I wish we (**live**) in a bigger house. This one is too small.
- 3 Becca wishes she (**be**) old enough to drive a car.
- 4 Do you wish you (**feel**) more confident about the exam tomorrow?
- 5 I wish my computer (**not / be**) broken. I can't check my e-mail.
- 6 I wish I (**not / like**) chocolate so much! I eat three bars a day!
- 7 Grant wishes he (**not / make**) so many mistakes all the time.
- 8 Look what they're wearing! I bet they wish they (**not / look**) so silly!

B Complete using the correct form of the verbs in the box. You may have to use some negative forms.

feel • give • have • live • spend • wear

- 1 I wish I in the countryside. The city is so noisy!
- 2 Tracy has got curly hair but she often wishes she straight hair.
- 3 I wish our teachers us less homework every day, but there's nothing I can do about it.
- 4 I wish I so scared, but I do!
- 5 Do you wish you contact lenses or are you happy with glasses?
- 6 Jake's mum wishes he so much money on clothes whenever he goes shopping.

C Look at the pictures and complete the sentences.



- 1 I wish I (**win**).
- 2 I wish I (**listen**) to my mother.
- 3 I wish we (**bring**) a camera with us.
- 4 I wish I (**study**) a bit harder for this test.
- 5 I wish I (**not / make**) so many phone calls last month!
- 6 I wish he (**not / choose**) me!

D The words in bold in each sentence are wrong. Write the correct word or phrase.

- 1 I wish I **can** speak German, but I never learnt it at school.
- 2 I wish you **will** put your toys away! It's not difficult!
- 3 Do you sometimes wish you **can** fly?
- 4 I wish you **won't** lie to me all the time!
- 5 I wish the neighbours **won't** make so much noise.
- 6 If only she **will** ask me to go to the disco with her!
- 7 If only you **can** come with us!

E Choose the correct answer.

- 1 I wish I an MP3 player.
A have B had C would have
- 2 We all wish Tim with the housework.
A helps B will help C would help
- 3 I wish I to buy a lottery ticket last night.
A remember B remembered C had remembered
- 4 I wish you live so far away.
A don't B didn't C won't
- 5 I wish they keep changing the time of this programme.
A couldn't B wouldn't C don't
- 6 Do you wish you to help Michael in the shop last weekend?
A hadn't offered B didn't offer C haven't offered

F Circle the correct word or phrase.

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I wish today (1) **has / had** never happened! If only I (2) **could / would** start the day again, I'd do everything differently. Why did I forget to set the alarm last night? I really wish I (3) **haven't / hadn't** done that! I also wish I (4) **live / lived** nearer the Earth. It takes such a long time to get there from Mars – especially when the traffic is bad. (5) **If only / Only if** I (6) **have / had** a faster spaceship. Anyway, the point is, I was late for my job interview. The first question they asked was why I wanted to be an Environmental Officer on the moon. Do you know what I said? Because I really wanted to look at the aliens in the Super Alien Zoo. Oh, I wish I (7) **didn't say / hadn't said** that. Why am I so stupid? I (8) **wish / hope** now that I'd never applied for the job in the first place. I'm sure I won't get the job. I just (9) **wish / hope** tomorrow is better than today was.