



I WISH/I ONLY

Wishes about The Present

We use **wish** with **past Tense forms** (simple and continuous) to express regret about **present situations**:

- I wish I **was** taller = (I'm not very tall)
- I wish I **was** going with you = (but I'm not)

"I wish you **were** more helpful. = (you **are not**).

"I wish I **were**" can replace "I wish I **was**."

NOTE : If you want to be more grammatically correct, "**I wish I were**" is the best choice. Therefore, whenever **taking a test**, **writing a composition** or in any other **more formal situation**, for instance, prefer to use "**were**" :

✓ "I wish I **were** taller."

We use wish with **could** to express a wish for a present situation to be different when talking about **ability** or **possibility**. **Would** is not used to talk about **ability** or **possibility** :

✓ I wish I **could** use a computer well.

~~❌ I wish I **would** tell her about it.~~

✓ I wish I **could** tell her about it.

Therefore, we use the **main verb in the Past Tense** (Past Simple or Past Continuous) every time we talk about **Present Regrets** with **I wish** and **If Only** sentences:

I wish I **knew** the answer. (= I don't know)

I wish I **was /were** better at sports. (= I'm not)

I wish I **was /were** going with you. (= I'm not)

I wish I **could** give you an answer. (= I can't)

Wishes about The Future

We use **wish** with **would** to say how we would like somebody to behave in the future.

In these situations, we don't use the **infinitive form** "**to + verb**" or "**will**" :

NOTE: after the verb "**stop**" an "**-ing**" verb form follows to indicate that action is to be finished.

~~❌ I wish you **to stop** talking.~~

✓ I wish you **would stop** *talking.

~~❌ I wish that they **will** stop arguing.~~

I wish they **would stop** *arguing.

We can also use this pattern in situations that do not involve people:

"I wish this car would go faster".

Wishes about The Past

We use **wish** with **the *Past Perfect ("had + past participle")** or ***could have + past participle** when we have Regrets about the **past**:

*"I wish I ***hadn't taken** your advice." (= but I did)*

*"I wish she ***could have come**." (= but she couldn't)*

If only

*If only can be **more emphatic** than **I wish**. The verb forms after "**if only**" are the same as the patterns with "**I wish**":*

*If only I **had** more money! (= but I don't)*

*If only I **was** going on holiday with you! (=but I'm not)*

*If only you **were** here. (= but you're not)*

*If only the sun **would** come out! (=but it won't)*

*If only you **could be** here! (= but you can't)*

*If only I'd **listened** to you! (=but I didn't)*

*If only he **could have explained**! (=but he wasn't able to)*

Now complete the following sentences with the correct form of the verb in parentheses. Some sentences will require a negative form. Use contractions in the negative forms.

1. I wish you (**stop**) using your cell phone while I am talking to you!
2. Michael wishes he (**have**) more money so he could buy a new car.
3. Harry is always late. If only he (**show up**) on time for a change!
4. I wish vacation (**come**) so we could go to the beach.
5. Of course Susan wishes she (**come**) with us to Venice, but she has to stay here in Dallas.
6. I wish we (**go**) to the soccer game on Saturday but we're visiting my uncle.
7. I wish I (**be**) a better singer so that I could sing her a beautiful song.
8. I wish you (**keep**) your mouth shut yesterday. Now Clara knows the truth.
9. I wish you (**do**) that. It **gets on my nerves!**
10. If only I (**lose**) all my money. Now **I'm broke!**