

English Grammar – Wishes (Desires and Regrets)

1. Hypothetical desires for the present (“*I wish*” + *past simple*)

- Examples:
- a. I wish that I **had** a car.
 - b. I wish that I **were** rich.
(*In informal English, we can use “I wish I was rich.”*)
 - c. I wish that I **spoke** Spanish.
 - d. I wish that I **could** swim.

- Exercise:
- a) I don't have a lot of money.
I wish that _____
 - b) I am not a doctor.

 - c) I'm hungry.

2. Desires for this moment (“*I wish*” + *past continuous*)

- Examples:
- a. I wish that I **were sitting** on the beach.
(*In informal English, we can use “I was sitting”*)
 - b. I wish that we **were finishing** the class.

- Exercise:
- a) I prefer to study Spanish.

 - b) The sun is not shining.

3. Desires for other people to do/change something (“*I wish*” + “*would*” + *bare infinitive*)

- Examples:
- a. I wish that the others **would arrive**.
 - b. I wish that he **would stop** talking.
 - c. I wish that she **would pay attention** to me.

- Exercise:
- a) I think he is driving too fast, and I'm a little scared.

 - b) He is dirty and smelly, and I find it offensive.

 - c) The dog is barking all the time, and it's bothering me.

4. Regrets/Hypothetical Past (“*I wish*” + *past perfect*)

- Examples:
- a. I wish that my grades **had been** better.
 - b. I wish that he **hadn't driven** so fast.
 - c. He wishes that he **had gotten up** earlier.

- Exercise:
- a) He regrets that he missed the bus.

 - b) I regret that I didn't study harder.

 - c) I regret that I didn't kiss her.

An example in three contexts:

- *Hypothetical desire:* I wish that he **had** a car.
- *Desire for someone to do something:* I wish that he **would buy** a car.
- *Regret:* I wish that he **had bought** a car.

Exercise. Choose the correct option.

1. She failed most of her exams, and now she wishes that she _____ harder.
a. works b. worked c. would work d. had worked
2. I have to take the bus to work every day. I wish that I _____ a car.
a. have had b. had c. would have d. had had
3. The weather's terrible today. I wish that it _____ a bit warmer.
a. is b. were c. would be d. had been
4. It really annoys me that you never do anything around the house! I wish that you _____.
a. help b. helped c. would help d. had helped
5. I missed my English class because I went to the doctor's. I wish that I _____ it.
a. don't miss b. didn't miss c. wouldn't miss d. hadn't missed
6. The last bus always leaves early. I wish that the driver _____ more time.
a. waits b. waited c. would wait d. had waited
7. I feel very sick. I wish that we _____ to that restaurant for lunch.
a. go b. didn't go c. wouldn't go d. hadn't gone
8. She doesn't love me, but I wish that she _____.
a. does b. did c. loved d. loves
9. I gave my phone number to that man in the pub. I wish that I _____.
a. won't b. didn't have c. wouldn't d. hadn't
10. I love flying! I wish that I _____ now.
a. was flying b. were flying c. had flown d. flew