Lesson 4

Expressing Wishes

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Learn English Differently

Grammar Explorer

I wish…/If only…

Function

Expressing a wish, regret and desire.

Illustration

Imagine the following situations:

1. Imagine you were taking an exam and you failed to remember the information you learned by heart!

This situation happened in the **past**, right?

The next day, you meet your friend and say:

"I **wish** I **had revised** well."



Expressing regret

2. Imagine you were walking down the streets and you suddenly stopped by a shop and wished to buy the newest fancy products showcased! But you didn't have enough money…

This situation made you wish to have a lot of money!

You went home and said to your mom!

"I **wish** I **were** **a millionaire**!"



Expressing a wish

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3. Imagine you always come late to your class. Your teacher complains and tells you:

"I **wish** you **would not** **arrive late all the time**!"



Complaining

Rule:

1. **Expressing regret**: (about a past situation)

You regret that you did not revise well even though you've had enough time.

wish + past perfect.

I wish I had known the answer.
I wish I had woken up early.

2. Expressing a wish: (about a future desire)

You dream about being a millionaire. You really want to have money to be able to buy everything you desire but it's unreal (at least, at the present time).

wish + past simple.

Remark: you do not say: "I wish I ~~was~~…", rather say: "I wish I **were**…".

I wish I were you…
I wish my friends were here to support me…

3. **Complaining**: (about a present situation)

You complain about a behavior that annoys you or express your dissatisfaction with a present situation.

✓ We often use this kind of expression to change a certain behavior.

wish + **would** + verb (infinitive)

I wish you would come earlier.
I wish you would clean after you.

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Note:

You can make the regret ***stronger*** *by using "if only" instead of "I wish".*

E.g.

If only I had followed my father's advice.

[I wish I had followed my father's advice].

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