

A

You can say 'I wish you luck / all the best / a happy birthday' etc. :

- I wish you all the best in the future.
- I saw Mark before the exam and he wished me luck.

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

- I'm sorry you're not well. I **hope** you **feel** better soon. (*not* I wish you feel)

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:



It's been raining all day. Tanya doesn't like it. She says:

**I wish** it **would stop** raining.

Tanya 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'd **do** (= 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. (= please don't interrupt me)

We use **I wish** ... **would** ... to say that we want something to happen. But we do not use **I wish** ... **would** ... to say how we would like things *to be*. 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)