

'wish' and 'if only'

We use *wish* and *if only* to talk about things that we would like to be different in either the present or the past. *If only* is usually a bit stronger than *wish*.

In the present

We can use *wish/if only* + a **past form** to talk about a *present situation* we would like to be different.

*I wish you **didn't live** so far away.*

*If only we **knew** what to do.*

*He wishes he **could afford** a holiday.*

In the past

We can use *wish/if only* + a **past perfect form** to talk about something *we would like to change about the past*. (Regrets about the past)

*They wish they **hadn't eaten** so much chocolate. They're feeling very sick now.*

*If only I **had studied** harder when I was at school.*

Practice

A) Make sentences using 'wish' + *past simple* about the things I don't like.

1. I don't have a car. _____
2. I can't play the piano. _____
3. I'm at work. _____
4. It's winter. _____
5. I'm ill. _____
6. I don't have new shoes. _____
7. I can't afford to go on holiday. _____
8. I don't have time to read lots of books. _____
9. I can't drive. _____
10. My laptop is broken. _____



B) Regrets about the past. These people did something yesterday which they now regret. What does each person say? Use the Past Perfect.

e.g. Clare has caught a bad cold - yesterday she went out in the rain without an umbrella. / I wish/ If only I hadn't gone out in the rain without an umbrella.

1. Joe has got very bad sunburn - yesterday he stayed in the sun for long.

I

2. He's got an awful stomachache - yesterday he ate a lot.

I

3. Lewis hurt his leg in a car crash - yesterday he didn't drive carefully.

I

4. Sue has hurt her back - yesterday she lifted a heavy table on her own.

I

5. I didn't study enough.

If only.....

6. I ate too much.

I

7. My teacher didn't explain correctly.

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8. I slept only 3 hours.

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9. I wasn't on time for the meeting.

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10. He didn't pay attention in class.

If only

