

Grammar Reference

What verb forms follow 'wish'?

For wishes about the present or future, use the subjunctive. Follow **I wish** with the **past subjunctive**. The past subjunctive looks like the **past simple**, except for the verb **to be** which uses **were** for all subjects.

*I wish I **had** a better job.*

*I wish I **were** famous.*

*I wish I **didn't spend** so much on clothes.*

For wishes about the past, use the **past perfect**.

*I wish I **hadn't drunk** so much last night.*

*I wish I **had accepted** the job.*

Ways of using the verb 'wish'

1) Wish – something unlikely or impossible to be true

We use this pattern when we imagine a different past or present situation which is very unlikely or impossible. The clause after **wish** often uses a past form of the verb, such as **was** and **hadn't** in these examples:

*I wish my eyesight **was** better.*

*I wish I **hadn't** told her.*

2) Wish – for something

This is when you think very hard about something you want to happen - you **wish** for it to happen. We use it with **for**:

*I wish **for** a happy, peaceful life.*

*She wished **for** a better job.*

3) Wish – someone something

This is when you tell someone you hope they will experience something good like being safe or happy (it's usually something good, but not always!). There is an indirect object (**him**) and a direct object (**a safe trip**) in the example:

*I wished **him a safe trip**!*

Here are two more examples which follow this pattern:

*He wished **me luck**!*

*I wish **you a happy anniversary**!*

