

Wish

Let's start off with the easy part. 'I wish to' can mean the same as 'I want to' but it is much, much more formal and much, much less common.

- I wish to make a complaint.
- I wish to see the manager.

You can also use 'wish' with a noun to 'offer good wishes'.

- I wish you all the best in your new job.
- We wish you a merry Christmas.

Notice that when you want to offer good wishes using a verb, you must use 'hope' and not 'wish'.

- We wish you the best of luck.
- We hope you have the best of luck.
- I wish you a safe and pleasant journey.
- I hope you have a safe and pleasant journey.

However, the main use of 'wish' is to say that we would like things to be different from what they are, that we have regrets about the present situation.

- I wish I were rich.
- He wishes he lived in Paris.
- They wish they'd chosen a different leader.

Notice that the verb tense which follows 'I wish' is 'more in the past' than the tense corresponding to its meaning.

- I'm too fat. I wish I were thin.
- I never get invited to parties. I wish I got invited to parties.
- It's raining. I wish it wasn't raining.
- I went to see the latest Star Wars film. I wish I hadn't gone.
- I've eaten too much. I wish I hadn't eaten so much.
- I'm going to visit her later. I wish I wasn't going to visit her later.

In the case of 'will', where 'will' means 'show willingness' we use 'would'.

- He won't help me. I wish he would help me.
- You're making too much noise. I wish you would be quiet.
- You keep interrupting me. I wish you wouldn't do that.

Where 'will' means a future event, we cannot use 'wish' and must use 'hope'.

- There's a strike tomorrow. I hope some buses will still be running.
- I hope everything will be fine in your new job.

In more formal English, we use the subjunctive form 'were' and not 'was' after 'wish'.

- I wish I were taller.
- I wish it were Saturday today.
- I wish he were here.

1 I don't have anything to smoke.

- I wish I knew more people.
- I wish I had more time.
- I wish I had a cigarette.
- I wish I knew something about cars.
- I wish I understood it better.

2 Simon has gone on holiday and I really need to speak to him.

- I wish I was twenty again.
- I wish I was better-looking.
- I wish they were smaller.
- I wish he was here.
- I wish I could as I love visiting Spain on holiday.

3 Girls don't like me because I'm ugly!

- I wish I was twenty again.
- I wish I was better-looking.
- I wish I had a more powerful one
- I wish I had an interesting one.
- I wish I could as I love visiting Spain on holiday.

4 I don't have much time.

- I wish I knew more people.
- I wish I had more time.
- I wish I wasn't working.
- I wish I knew something about cars.
- I wish I understood it better.

5 My computer is old and slow.

- I wish it were possible as it is a country I love
- I wish I earned more money.

- I wish I had a more powerful one
 - I wish I lived in a hotter country.
 - I wish I finished earlier.
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6 It's really cold here. The climate is awful.

- I wish I knew more people.
 - I wish I had more time.
 - I wish I had a cigarette.
 - I wish I lived in a hotter country.
 - I wish I understood it better.
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7 I'm lonely.

- I wish I knew more people.
- I wish I were a better cook.
- I wish I wasn't working.
- I wish I knew something about cars.
- I wish I understood it better.