

I. It's time**• Its time, its high time**

These are followed by the past simple or continuous, though the time referred to is unreal.

- *It's time we left.*
- *It's high time something was done about this!*

II. Wishes**• Present / future time**

Notice the past verb forms after **wish**.

These are wishes where you want to change a present / future state.

- *I wish I had a motorbike. (I don't have one now.)*
- *I wish I was going on holiday with you next week. (I am not going.)*

• Would

Would is used when the speaker wants somebody or something else to change.

- *I wish he would change his mind and marry Jane.*
- *I wish it would stop raining.*

The use of **would** is often used to describe an annoying habit.

- *I wish you wouldn't make such a mess.*

• Past time

As with present wishes, the verb form after **wish** is one stage further back in the past.

These are wishes referring to a past event, which cannot be changed.

- *I wish I hadn't eaten so much.*

This use of **wish** is similar to the use of **if only** to express regrets.

• Hope

Wishes about simple future events are expressed with **hope + present simple**. Sometimes a future form can be used.

- *I hope it doesn't rain tomorrow.*
- *I hope Jim comes / will come to the party tonight.*

• I'd rather/I'd prefer (followed by a clause)

I'd rather is followed by **past verb forms** in the same way as wishes about the present. It expresses preference about actions.

- *I'd rather you didn't smoke in here.*

Both **I'd rather** and **I'd sooner** are used with infinitive without **to** when comparing nouns or phrases.

- *I'd rather be a doctor than a teacher. (present)*
- *I'd rather have lived in Hanoi than Haiphong. (past)*

I'd prefer is used with **it + subject + past verb form** to express preference about actions.

- *I'd prefer it if you didn't smoke.*

I'd prefer is also used with **you / him / her**, etc + **infinitive** with **'to'** to show what we would like a person to do. We can add **rather than + infinitive** without **'to'** as a comparison.

- *I'd prefer you to sit in your seat (rather than sit on the floor).*
- *I'd prefer you not to sit on the floor.*

I'd prefer + noun can be used to show which thing we would like to have.

- *I'd prefer tea to coffee.*

III. As if, as though*** Real and unreal**

The verb form here depends on whether the situation is true or unreal.

- *You look as if you're having second thoughts. (You are having second thoughts.)*
- *He acts as if he were in charge. (Unreal. He isn't in charge.)*
- *I feel as if an express train had hit me. (Unreal. It didn't hit me.)*

Note however, that the more colloquial **like** does not require this verb form change.

This use is not considered acceptable, however, in formal or written English. Compare:

- *You look like you've just seen a ghost. (informal / colloquial)*
- *You look as if you'd just seen a ghost. (formal)*

IV. Suppose and imagine*** Understood outcomes**

The outcome part of these sentences is often understood but not stated.

- *Suppose someone told you that I was a spy! (I'm not sure about it.)*
- *Imagine we'd never met! (We have met.)*

If the event referred to is a real possibility, a **present verb form** is possible.

- *Suppose it starts raining, what'll we do?*

Formal subjunctives*** Insisting, demanding, etc.**

After verbs such as **demand**, **insist**, **suggest**, **require**, which imply obligation, the subjunctive may be used in formal style. The subjunctive is the same verb form as the infinitive; there is no third person **-s** or past form.

- *They demanded that he leave at once.*
- *The school Principal suggested that he be awarded a scholarship.*

*** Less formal usage**

Less formally, **should** can be used, and colloquially no verb form change is made.

- *They demanded that he should leave.*
- *They demanded that he left. (informal)*

Formulaic subjunctives

These are fixed expressions all using the subjunctive. Typical expressions are:

- *Heaven help us! Be that as it may ... Come what may ...*

PRACTICE

1. Underline the correct word to complete each sentence.

1. I hope / wish I'll see you again soon.
2. I hope / wish the weather improves soon.
3. I hope / wish I knew the answer.
4. I hope / wish you didn't have to go.
5. I hope / wish you'd stop shouting so much.
6. I hope / wish nothing goes wrong.
7. I hope / wish it would stop raining.
8. I hope / wish you can come to my party.
9. I hope / wish you don't mind.
10. I hope / wish we could meet next week.

2. Complete each sentence with a word or phrase

1. I wish you would stop making so much noise late at night!
2. I'd rather the children.....on the television without permission.
3. Suppose.....half the money I owe you. Would that satisfy you?
4. I hope.....get into trouble on my account. What do you think they'll say?
5. This is an awful hotel. I wish we..... to the *Novotel* instead.
6. We.....you contact head office in advance.
7. I think it's high time we.....locking all the windows at night.
8. Would you rather Ilunch, if you feel tired?
9. I wish my car.....as fast as yours.
10. I'd prefer you.....smoke in here, if you don't mind.

3. Complete each sentence with the best form of the verb in brackets.

1. I'd rather you (*not / watch*)...didn't watch... television while I'm reading.
2. It's high time you (*start*)..... working seriously.
3. I wish I (*spend*)..... more time swimming last summer.
4. Vicky is bossy. She acts as if she (*own*).....the place.
5. I wish you (*not / keep*).....coming late to class.
6. Suppose a complete stranger (*leave*).....you a lot of money in their will!
7. I wish I (*go*)..... to your party after all.
8. I'd rather you (*sit*).....next to Susan, please.
9. The government demanded that the ambassador (*be*)..... recalled
10. You are lucky going to Italy. I wish I (*go*).....with you.

4. Complete each sentence with ONE word.

1. It'shigh time.....you learnt to look after yourself!
2. I wish you..... try listening to me, just for once!
3. I rather not go by train, if possible.
4. that as it may, it doesn't alter the seriousness of the situation.
5. I wish Carol..... be here to see you all.
6. We both wish you..... staying longer.

7. You.....as if you had played in the match instead of watching it!
8.they offered you the job of managing director!
9. I really wish we..... married.
10. I you didn't mind my phoning so late.

5. Correct the error(s) in each sentence.

1. I wish I bought that old house.. => *I wish I had bought that old house.*
2. I'd rather you don't eat all the bread.....
3. It's time I go.....
4. I wish I own a motorbike.....
5. I wish we are not leaving in the morning.
6. Sue would rather reading than watching television.....
7. Come what comes, I'll be on your side.....
8. I hope it would stop raining.....
9. I'd prefer if you didn't wait.....
10. I wish I didn't listen to you before.....

6. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

1. Do you ever regret not going to university? **WISH**
Do you everto university?
2. I should really be going home now. **TIME**
It's.....home now.
3. I'd rather not go by plane. **PREFER**
I'dgo by plane.
4. Jack doesn't know all the answers, though he pretends to. **ACTS**
Jack.....all the answers.
5. I'd love to be able to go with you to the opera. **WISH**
Igo with you to the opera.
6. I wish I hadn't sold that old painting. **PITY**
It'sthat old painting.
7. I'd rather you didn't stay long at the party. **BETTER**
It
8. The management said it was important for us to wear dark suits to the meeting. **INSISTED**
The management.....dark suits to the meeting.
9. I've had enough of your constant complaining! **WISH**
Icomplaining all the time!
10. I'd love to be sitting on a beach in Nhatrang right now! **WISH**
I.....on a beach in Nhatrang right now!

7. Complete the second sentence so that the meaning is similar to the first sentence.

1. I wish you were a bit tidier.
I wish you would put your things away.
2. I wish you were more interested in your school work.
I wish you would.....

3. I wish I spoke more languages.
I wish I could.....
4. I wish I had enough money to buy a car.
I wish I could.....
5. I wish they had more chess books in the library.
I wish the library would.....
6. I wish there was some soap in the bathroom.
I wish the cleaners would.....
7. I just wish my partner was a bit more romantic!
I just wish my partner would.....

8. Complete the text, using one word in each gap. Contractions (e.g. don't) count as one word.

Dear Tom,

Well, this time next week you'll be somewhere in Europe. You're so lucky. I'd love to (1)....**be**....able to go off around the world. I often wish I (2).....travelled more when I was younger. I really hope you (3).....yourself, but you will be careful, won't you? You're only 18 after all. Do be careful with your money too. And I'd rather you (4).....spend too many nights in your tent alone- It's so dangerous.

I suggest you only (5).....in your tent on a proper campsite. I wish you (6).....going quite so soon, it's a pity you (7).....stay until after Dad's 50th birthday. But never mind. I wish Dad had (8).....here to see you off, but he had some really important business that day. Suppose we (9).....you at some nice seaside place in June? Just a thought. Anyway, remember, if you get into any trouble, we're only a phone call away, and come what (10).....we'll always be there for you.

*Love,
Mum*



Ban Gioc Waterfalls in Cao Bang, Vietnam

ANSWER KEY

- I. hope 2 hope 3 wish 4 wish 5 wish 6 hope 7 wish 8 hope 9 hope 10 wish
- II. I would stop 2 didn't turn / switch 3 I paid / gave you (back) 4 you don't / won't 5 had gone / could go 6 suggest (that) 7 started / stopped 8 made / got / prepared / cooked 9 was / went 10 not to
- III. I didn't watch 2 started 3 had spent 4 owned / owns 5 wouldn't keep 6 left 7 had gone 8 sat 9 (should) be bathroom 10 was / were going / could go
- IV. I. high 2. would 3. would 4. Be 5. could 6. were 7. look 8. Suppose / Supposing 9. were 10. Hope
- V. I wish I had bought that old house. 2. I'd rather you didn't eat all the bread. 3. It's time I went. 4 I wish I owned a motorbike. 5. I wish we were not leaving in the morning. 6. Sue would rather read than watch television. 7. Come what may, I'll be on your side. 8. I hope it stops/will stop raining. (or) I wish it would stop raining. 9. I'd prefer you not to wait. (or) I'd rather you didn't wait. (or) I'd prefer it if you didn't wait. 10. I wish I hadn't listened to you before
- VI. I wish you had gone 2. time I was going / went 3. prefer not to 4. acts as if / though he knows / knew 5. wish I could 6. a pity I sold 7. would be better if you didn't 8. insisted on us / our wearing / that we wear 9. wish you would stop / wouldn't keep 10. wish I was / were sitting
- VII. 1. put your things away 2. take / show more interest in your school work 3. speak more languages 4. afford to buy a car 5. get / buy (some) more chess books 6. put some soap in the bathroom 7. be a bit more romantic 8. can't 8. been 9. met 10. may
- VIII. 1. be 2. had 3. enjoy 4. didn't 5. sleep 6. weren't