

if I had known ... I wish I had known ...

A

Study this example situation:

Last month Gary was in hospital for a few days. Rachel didn't know this.
A few days ago they met by chance. Rachel said:

If I'd known you were in hospital, **I would have gone** to visit you.
(= I didn't know, so I didn't go to visit you)

If I'd known = If I **had** known. This tells us that she *didn't* know before.

We use **if + had ('d)** ... to talk about the past (**if I'd known / if you'd done** etc.):

- ☐ I didn't see you when you passed me in the street. **If I'd seen** you, I would have said hello.
- ☐ They didn't go out last night. They would have gone out **if they hadn't been** so tired. (but they were tired)
- ☐ **If you'd been looking** where you were going, you wouldn't have walked into the wall. (but you weren't looking)
- ☐ The view was wonderful. I would have taken some pictures **if I'd had** (= if I **had had**) a camera with me. (but I didn't have a camera)

Compare:

- ☐ I'm not hungry. **If I was** hungry, I would eat something. (*now*)
- ☐ I wasn't hungry. **If I had been** hungry, I would have eaten something. (*past*)

B

We do *not* say 'if something would have happened'. We use **would** in the other part of the sentence:

- ☐ **If I had seen** you, **I would have said** hello. (*not* If I would have seen you)

The short form **'d** can be **would** or **had**:

- ☐ If **I'd seen** you, (I'd seen = I **had** seen)
I'd have said hello. (I'd have said = I **would** have said)

C

We use **had done/known/been** etc. in the same way after **wish**.

I wish something **had happened** = I am sorry that it didn't happen

I wish something **hadn't happened** = I am sorry that it happened

- ☐ **I wish I'd known** that Gary was ill. I would have gone to see him. (but I didn't know)
- ☐ I feel sick. **I wish I hadn't eaten** so much. (I ate too much)
- ☐ Do you **wish you'd studied** science instead of languages? (you didn't study science)

Compare:

- ☐ **I'm glad I saw** him. (= I **saw** him)
- ☐ **I wish I'd seen** him. (= I **didn't see** him)

We do *not* say 'wish ... would have ...'.

- ☐ The weather was cold. I wish it **had been** warmer. (*not* I wish it would have been)

D

Compare **would (do)** and **would have (done)**:

- ☐ If I'd gone to the party last night, **I would be** tired now. (I am not tired now – *present*)
- ☐ If I'd gone to the party last night, **I would have met** lots of people. (I didn't meet lots of people – *past*)

Compare **would have**, **could have** and **might have**:

- ☐ If the weather hadn't been so bad, { we **would have gone** out.
we **could have gone** out.
(= we would have been able to go out)
we **might have gone** out.
(= maybe we would have gone out)

Exercises

40.1 Put the verb into the correct form.

- I didn't see you. If I'd seen (I / see) you, I would have said (I / say) hello.
- Sarah got to the station just in time to catch her train to the airport. If (she / miss) the train, (she / miss) her flight too.
- Thanks for reminding me about Lisa's birthday. (I / forget) if (you / not / remind) me.
- I didn't have your email address, so I couldn't contact you. If (I / have) your email address, (I / send) you an email.
- Their trip was OK, but (they / enjoy) it more if the weather (be) better.
- Sorry we're late. Our taxi got stuck in the traffic. (it / be) quicker if (we / walk).
- Why didn't you tell me about your problem? If (you / tell) me, (I / try) to help you.
- I'm not tired. If (I / be) tired, I'd go home now.
- I wasn't tired last night. If (I / be) tired, I would have gone home earlier.

40.2 For each situation, write a sentence beginning with If.

- I wasn't hungry, so I didn't eat anything.
If I'd been hungry, I would have eaten something.
- The accident happened because the road was icy.
If the road
- I didn't know that you had to get up early, so I didn't wake you up.
If I
- Unfortunately I lost my phone, so I couldn't call you.
.....
- Karen wasn't injured in the crash, because fortunately she was wearing a seat belt.
.....
- You didn't have any breakfast – that's why you're hungry now.
.....
- I didn't get a taxi because I didn't have enough money.
.....
- Dan didn't do well at school, so he couldn't go to university.
.....

40.3 Imagine that you are in these situations. For each situation, write a sentence with I wish.

- You've eaten too much and now you feel sick.
You say: I wish I hadn't eaten so much.
- When you were younger, you never learned to play a musical instrument. Now you regret this.
You say:
- You've painted the gate red. Now you think it doesn't look good. Red was the wrong colour.
You say:
- You decided to travel by car, but the journey was long and tiring. Going by train would have been better.
You say: I wish we
- Last year you went to New York with a friend. You didn't have time to do all the things you wanted to do.
You say:
- You moved to a new flat a few months ago. Now you don't like your new flat. You think that moving was a bad idea.
You say: