PDF 1 - Present regrets (unreal present).



WISH / IF ONLY

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1. Three ways to use “wish” and “if only”

We use wish and if only to talk about things we want to be different.
If only is stronger and more emotional than wish.

A. Present regrets (unreal present)

We want something in the present to be different.

Form	Example
wish / if only + past simple	I wish I had more free time.
	If only I knew the answer.
(with be we often use were)	I wish I were taller.

B. Past regrets

We are sorry about something that happened (or didn’t happen) in the past.

Form	Example
wish / if only + past perfect	I wish I had studied harder.
	If only I hadn’t said that.

C. Wishes about the future / annoyance

We want something to change in the future, or we are annoyed with a present situation (especially someone’s behaviour).

Form	Example
wish / if only + would	I wish you would listen to me.
	If only it would stop raining.

2. Quick Check – Circle the correct option

1. I wish I have / had / would have a bigger apartment.
2. If only she didn’t tell / hadn’t told / wouldn’t tell everyone my secret last week.
3. I wish my neighbours stop / stopped / would stop playing loud music at night.
4. If only I was / were / would be better at speaking English.
5. He wishes he studied / had studied / would study more when he was at university.

3. Match the sentence with the meaning

Sentence	Meaning
1. I wish I had more money.	a) Past regret
2. If only I hadn’t eaten so much.	b) Present regret
3. I wish you would call me more often.	c) Wish for change / future

Answers: 1-___ 2-___ 3-___

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Answer Key

2. Quick Check

1. had
2. hadn't told
3. would stop
4. were
5. had studied

3. Match

1 – b 2 – a 3 – c

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