

Hope and Wish

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We use the verb *hope* when something is very possible.

We use the verb *wish* about impossible things or things that are not likely to happen (things that you don't really expect to happen.)

Hope

To say what you hope about the **past**, you use the **simple past**:

I *hope* she *found* the restaurant.

I *hope* he *passed* his class last semester.

To say what you hope about the **present**, you use the **present**:

I *hope* he's all right.

I *hope* he *knows* where the clinic is.

I *hope* he's *having* a good time in Florida.

I *hope* he *likes* Italian food.

To say what you hope about the **future**, you use the **present** (or the future, although it is less common):

I *hope* he *has* a good time in Florida next month.

(I hope he'll have a good time in Florida next month.)

I *hope* she *comes* to see us when she passes through New York.

(I hope she'll come to see us when she passes through New York.)

Wish

To say what you wish about the **past**, you use the **past perfect**:

I *wish* I *had passed* my ESL class last semester! (You didn't pass.)

I *wish* she *had given* me her phone number. (She didn't give it to you.)

To say what you wish about the **present**, you use the **past**:

I *wish* I *had* a good job. (You have a bad job now.)

I *wish* I *had* a million dollars. (You don't have a lot of money.)

I *wish* I *knew* how to speak Japanese. (You can't speak it.)

I *wish* I *could* type. (You can't type.)

I *wish* I *were* a good dancer. (You're a bad dancer.)

I *wish* she *were* nicer to me. (She's not nice to you.)

(Note! We use *were* for all subjects when we use *wish*.)

To say what you wish about the **future**, you use *would*:

I *wish* Clinton *would do* more to help the poor.

I *wish* you *would quit* smoking soon.

(Note! If you think there is a chance that something can happen, use *hope*, not *wish*: To say, "I *hope* Clinton *does* something about healthcare soon" means that you think there is a strong possibility that he will.)

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Exercises

Use *wish* or *hope* and an appropriate verb:

1. I wish I _____ a bigger house. I can't have a party for a big crowd here.
2. I hope she _____ a good job soon. She's three months behind in her rent.
3. I wish he _____. Those cigarettes have given him a terrible cough!
4. I wish you _____ at the party with me last night. It was so much fun!
5. I hope she _____ the stadium tonight with that map we drew for her.
6. I wish the teacher _____ things more clearly. I'm always confused in this class.
7. I wish I _____ some well-connected people who could help me with my problem.
8. I wish politicians _____ more honest! It seems that they're always lying.
9. I wish I _____ the Pope when he came to New York two years ago.
10. I hope I _____ the Pope when he comes here next month.
11. I hope everything _____ well for you during your final exam next week.
12. I hope everybody _____ this course next month.
13. I wish there _____ more books about computers in this bookstore.
14. I hope there _____ a lot of good books on computers at the bookstore.
15. I hope he _____ better soon. He's been out sick for two weeks!
16. I wish doctors _____ cure cancer. It's such a frightening disease!
17. I wish my grandfather _____ last year. There are so many things going on in my life that I wish I could talk to him about.
18. I hope Margaret _____ the present that we bought for her.
19. I wish Sam _____ sex with that girl. He got her into trouble and now his life is a mess.
20. I wish I _____ Chinese. It's impossible to go shopping here in Beijing.