



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

B1 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 10 · B1-10B

I wish I could...

Theme · Looking ahead



Unit 10 · B1·10B

I wish I could...

Theme: Looking ahead

B1 · General English



Learning objectives

- Talk about regrets, wishes and things you'd change about the present.
- Use 'wish + past simple' for present unreal wishes.
- Reflect honestly on what you'd do differently — without drama.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up · One small regret from this week

Think of **ONE** small regret from **THIS** week — not a life tragedy, just something you wish you'd done (or hadn't). Describe in 3 sentences.

What was it?

Why did you do (or not do) it?

Would you do it differently now?

Lead-in · If you had to choose (dilemmas)

Read each dilemma and pick **ONE** — you **MUST** choose. No 'both' allowed. Then compare.

1. Would you rather live for 100 years in the same small town, or 60 years travelling constantly?

2. Would you rather never use social media again, or never use a search engine again?

3. Would you rather be feared or ignored by your neighbours?

4. Would you rather have your dream job in a city you hate, or an average job in your favourite city?

5. Would you rather know exactly when you'll die, or exactly how?

followUp: Which dilemma was hardest? Which one did you decide quickly and surprise yourself?

Reading · The Monday list

On Sunday nights, my grandmother used to make what she called her 'Monday list'. It was a very small piece of paper — never more than five lines — with things she wished were different in her week. Not a plan, not a resolution, just a list of small honest wishes. 'I wish I called my sister more.' 'I wish the bathroom light didn't take so long.' 'I wish I understood the news.'

The rule was simple. She read the list on Monday morning, and she was allowed to change **ONE** thing during the week. Only one. She used to say most people try to change ten things at once, and end up changing zero.

I've started making my own Monday list. Last week's said 'I wish I read for longer at night'. That was the one I picked. I read for 25 minutes on Monday, 15 on Tuesday, and 3 minutes on Wednesday before falling asleep. Not perfect. But 43 more minutes than the week before, from **ONE** small honest wish and **ONE** small honest change.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. What was on the grandmother's list?
 - (A) Big goals
 - (B) Small honest wishes
 - (C) A shopping list
2. How many things could she change per week?
 - (A) All of them
 - (B) Just one
 - (C) Ten
3. What happened when the writer tried it?
 - (A) Nothing
 - (B) A small but real change (43 extra minutes of reading)
 - (C) Big overnight transformation

Vocabulary in context

Match the phrase to its meaning.

used to make — regularly made in the past

resolution — a firm decision to change

wish (something) were different — regret how something is now

end up (doing something) — finally do something (after everything)

True / False / Not Given

Based only on the text.

1. The grandmother wrote a big list every Monday.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
2. The writer read every night that week.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
3. The writer's grandmother is still alive.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given

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4. Trying to change too many things at once often ends in changing nothing.

- (A) True
- (B) False
- (C) Not Given

React to the text

Answer in 2–3 sentences.

1. What would go on YOUR Monday list this week?

2. Do you agree that ONE change per week is enough?

Scan for meaning

Find the word or phrase from the text.

1. regularly made in the past

2. regret how something is now

3. finally do something

Vocabulary · Regrets, wishes & change

regret (noun) — the feeling of wishing you'd acted differently

wish (noun) — something you want to happen

habit — something you do regularly

routine — the way you organise your day

change (noun) — a modification, something different

improvement — a positive change

look back on — think about the past

begin afresh — begin again from zero

give up — stop doing / stop trying

adhere to (a plan) — follow it without changing

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make time for — find time in your schedule for

have no regrets — not be sorry about anything

practice

Complete each sentence with ONE word or phrase from the lists.

1. I have to ____ ____ ____ my parents at least once a week.

2. When I ____ ____ ____ my 20s, I did some silly things.

3. I've decided to ____ ____ social media for a month.

4. This time I really need to ____ ____ ____ my plan.

5. Small ____ done every day beat big ones done once a year.

6. Ask her about her 30s — she claims she has no ____.

Collocations · with wish / regret / habit

Match each verb with its noun.

make — a wish / a change / a decision

have — a regret / a habit / a routine

break — a habit / a promise / a record

build — a habit / a routine / a skill

get over — a regret / an ex / a fear

Odd one out

Choose the word that does NOT belong.

1. regret · wish · hope · umbrella

(A) regret

(B) wish

(C) hope

(D) umbrella

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2. improve · change · grow · faint

(A) improve

(B) change

(C) grow

(D) faint

3. habit · routine · pattern · potato

(A) habit

(B) routine

(C) pattern

(D) potato

Word building · verb ↔ noun ↔ adjective

Complete each set.

utility:

1. regret (v) → a ____ (n) → I feel ____ (adj)

2. improve (v) → an ____ (n) → this is much ____ (adj)

3. change (v) → a ____ (n) → she's a ____ ____ (adj phrase)



Grammar · wish + past simple (present unreal wishes)

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. What 'wish + past simple' means — You WANT the present to be different — but it isn't. • I wish I HAD more time. (I don't have more time — I want it.) • I wish it WASN'T raining. (It IS raining — I don't want it to.) • She wishes she LIVED closer. (She doesn't — but she wants to.)

2. 'wish' + were (all persons — classic form) — • I wish I WERE taller. ■ (informal: 'was' is also common.) • He wishes he WERE more patient. In writing, prefer 'were'.

3. 'wish' + could / would — • wish + could = ability you don't have now. • I wish I COULD speak Japanese. (I can't.) • wish + would = annoyance about someone else's habit. • I wish he WOULD stop tapping his pen. (He keeps doing it, and I'm annoyed.) (Not usually 'I wish I would...' — for yourself, use 'could'.)

4. Don't confuse 'wish + past' with 'wish' as a polite verb — • I wish you a happy birthday. (verb + object — no clause) ■ • I wish that you were happier. (unreal wish + past simple) ■ The grammar in this lesson is (2).

Exercise A — Change to 'wish + past simple'

Rewrite each real complaint as an unreal wish.

1. I don't have more time.

2. It's raining.

3. She doesn't live closer.

4. I can't speak Japanese.

5. He always leaves the door open.

Exercise B — Choose the correct form

Complete each sentence.

1. I wish I ____ (be) taller.

2. She wishes she ____ (have) a bigger flat.

3. I wish it ____ (not / be) so cold today.

4. I wish I ____ (can) drive.

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5. I wish he ____ (stop) interrupting me.

Exercise C — Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake.

1. I wish I have more time.

2. She wishes she can speak Italian.

3. I wish it doesn't rain.

4. I wish I would be taller.

Exercise D — Match the wish to the situation

Match each real situation to the correct wish.

My flat is too small. — I wish my flat were bigger.

I can't cook. — I wish I could cook.

My colleague talks too much in meetings. — I wish he wouldn't talk so much in meetings.

It's raining all week. — I wish it wasn't raining every day.

I don't live near my family. — I wish I lived closer to my family.

Exercise E — About you

Complete each sentence truthfully.

1. I wish I ____

2. I wish I could ____

3. I wish (a specific person) would ____

Exercise F — Complete the mini-monologue

Complete each gap with the correct form.

1. It's midnight and I'm still awake. I wish I ____ (be) asleep, I wish my brain ____ (stop) reviewing that email, and I wish tomorrow's meeting ____ (not / be) at 8.

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2. My grandmother's not well. I wish I ____ (live) closer, I wish I ____ (can) visit every weekend, and I wish my brother ____ (call) her more often.

Listening · Two friends look back on their year

Late December, two friends over wine. They're doing a warm 'this year in review'. Notice the 'wish + past' phrases and how honestly they use them.

pre

Do you like doing 'end of year' reviews, or does it feel forced?

What's a small thing you WISH you'd done more of this year?

gist

1. What are the two friends doing?

2. What's Voice A's biggest 'wish' from this year?

3. What's Voice B's biggest 'wish'?

detail

1. What ONE thing does Voice A want to change for next year?

2. What ONE thing does Voice B want to change?

3. What did they both agree they DON'T wish?

Third listen — read between the lines

Answer from what is IMPLIED.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. Is this conversation heavy or light?

2. Are these two friends going to hold each other accountable?

Useful language from the audio

Match each phrase to what it does.

"I wish I had said no more often." — regret about the past year (mixed with present wish)

"I wish I could stop comparing myself." — wish + could — ability lacking

"I wish my phone would stop buzzing." — wish + would — someone's / something's annoying habit

"To be fair..." — opening a balanced statement

"Check on me in February." — asking a friend to hold you accountable

Voice A: OK — honest review of the year. No highlight reel.

Voice B: Deal. You first.

Voice A: Biggest wish? I wish I had said no more often. I took on too many extra projects and by October I was... empty.

Voice B: You WERE empty. I told you.

Voice A: You did. Fair.

Voice B: Mine is more embarrassing. I wish I could stop comparing myself to other people online. It poisoned half my year.

Voice A: That's not embarrassing. That's very human.

Voice B: Well. To be fair, both of us have decent lives. I don't wish we had earned more money. This year was fine that way.

Voice A: Agreed. Money wasn't the problem.

Voice B: One change for next year. Just one.

Voice A: One evening a week — fully offline. Phone in a drawer. From the second I get home.

Voice B: Mine: delete Instagram for the first 90 days of the year. Full experiment.

Voice A: OK. Check on me in February. I mean it.

Voice B: First Monday of Feb. Consider yourself checked.

Fourth listen — fill the gaps

Listen again and complete the exact phrases.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. I wish I ____ no more often.

2. I wish I ____ stop comparing myself.

3. I ____ wish we ____ more money.

4. One evening a week — ____.

Speaking · Your Monday list

In pairs, share YOUR 'Monday list' — 3 honest wishes about your current life. Use 'wish + past simple' correctly. Ask your partner to help pick ONE to change this week.

Scene: Work / study wishes

A: You: 3 honest wishes about work or study.

B: You: help your partner pick ONE small change.

Scene: Home / routine wishes

A: You: 3 honest wishes about your home or routine.

B: You: help your partner pick ONE small change.

Scene: Relationships wishes

A: You: 3 honest wishes about relationships (family, friends, partner).

B: You: help your partner pick ONE small change.

Discussion · wishes & change

Choose 2 questions and speak for 30–45 seconds each.

Do you have any regrets — big or small — that you actually think about?

What's ONE habit you wish you could break?

What's ONE habit you wish you could build?

Is 'I have no regrets' a beautiful or a lazy thing to say?

Role-play · The end-of-year friend review

Read your role, prepare, then run the conversation for 2 minutes.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Scene: Late December, coffee with a close friend

A: You: had a good year but three real 'I wish' regrets. Share them honestly.

B: You: had a rough year. Listen kindly. Then share ONE wish of your own.

Mini-presentation · 60-second Monday list

Deliver a 60-second honest 'Monday list'. Use at least FIVE 'wish' sentences.

Beat 1 (10s) — Set the scene (which Monday, what's on your mind).

Beat 2 (15s) — Two small wishes about routine.

Beat 3 (20s) — One deeper wish (relationships, career, health).

Beat 4 (15s) — The ONE you'll act on this week.

sample: It's Monday morning, I've had two coffees and my inbox has 84 emails. Small wishes: I wish I woke up earlier, and I wish I didn't check my phone in bed. Deeper wish: I wish I called my grandmother every Sunday instead of every three Sundays. The one I'll act on this week: phone stays in the kitchen after 10pm. For five nights. If that works, I'll extend it. If not, I'll accept I'm imperfect and try something smaller.

Writing · Your own Monday list

Write your OWN 5-line Monday list. Each line = 'I wish + past simple'. Then choose ONE and write one sentence describing how you'll act on it this week.

bonus: Bonus — Send the list to yourself by email. Open it in one month and see which wishes are still there.

Wrap-up · What did we cover?

'wish + past simple' = want the present to be different.

'wish + were' (all persons) is the classic form in writing.

'wish + could' = ability you don't have; 'wish + would' = annoying habit of someone else.

Try to change ONE thing at a time. Ten wishes at once = zero changes.

Quiz

1. "I wish I ____ more time."

(A) have

(B) had

(C) would have

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2. "I wish I ____ speak Japanese."
(A) can
(B) could
(C) would
3. "I wish he ____ interrupting me."
(A) stop
(B) stopped
(C) would stop
4. 'To give up' means...
(A) start again
(B) stop doing / stop trying
(C) make time for
5. "I wish it ____ raining."
(A) isn't
(B) weren't
(C) won't be

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Workbook — home practice

1. Vocabulary recall

Complete each sentence with the best word from the class-book lesson.

1. Write ONE new word from the lesson and its meaning in your own words.

2. Write ONE collocation from the lesson and use it in a sentence about your life.

3. Write ONE phrase you'd use in real conversation this week.

2. Grammar practice · wish + past simple

Rewrite each sentence using the target grammar of this lesson.

1. Sentence 1 → rewrite it correctly with the target grammar.

2. Sentence 2 → rewrite it correctly with the target grammar.

3. Sentence 3 → find and fix ONE mistake.

4. Sentence 4 → complete the gap with the correct form.

5. Sentence 5 → write your own example, true about you.

3. Reading recall

Look back at the class-book reading. Answer briefly in your own words.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. What was the main idea in ONE sentence?

2. What is ONE opinion of the writer you agree with?

3. What is ONE opinion you disagree with, and why?

4. Listening · a follow-up dialogue

Two voices talk about looking ahead for about a minute. Notice the target grammar in use.

1. What is the main topic of the conversation?

2. Who sounds more confident and why?

3. Which target-grammar phrase appears TWICE in the audio?

Voice A: So — tell me about your looking ahead this week. Anything different?

Voice B: Honestly, yes. I've been trying something new — and it's changed how I feel completely.

Voice A: Give me one specific example — I want the small detail, not the big story.

Voice B: OK: I stopped checking my phone before bed. Just that. And I already sleep better.

5. Writing · a short reflection

Write 70–100 words about the theme of this lesson. Use at least 2 examples of the target grammar and 3 words from the vocabulary list.

6. Reflection

Look back at your notes from class. Answer briefly.

1. What is ONE thing from this lesson you already use naturally?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



2. What is ONE thing you'd like to practise more this week? How exactly?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Answer key — Class Book

Lead-in · If you had to choose (dilemmas)

1. Model: 60 travelling — quality over quantity, and I'd rather have five stories than one.
2. Model: never social media — the internet was fine before it, and I still need Google to remember how to boil eggs.
3. Model: ignored — I don't want any of them ringing my doorbell about the bins.
4. Model: average job in the favourite city — jobs change, cities take years to move to.
5. Model: dark question. When — because I could plan the last month properly. How would only ruin the years in between.

Reading · The Monday list

1. (B) Small honest wishes
2. (B) Just one
3. (B) A small but real change (43 extra minutes of reading)
1. (B) False
2. (A) True
3. (C) Not Given
4. (A) True
1. Model: 'I wish I called my grandmother more', 'I wish I stopped opening Instagram at 11pm', 'I wish I finished at least one book a month'.
2. Model: yes — the two times I tried to change five things at once, I lasted about a Tuesday.
1. used to make
2. wish (something) were different
3. end up doing

Vocabulary · Regrets, wishes & change

1. make time for
2. look back on
3. give up
4. adhere to
5. improvements / changes
6. regrets
1. (D) umbrella
2. (D) faint
3. (D) potato
1. regret / regretful
2. improvement / improved
3. change / changed person

Grammar · wish + past simple (present unreal wishes)

1. I wish I had more time.
2. I wish it wasn't raining. / I wish it weren't raining.
3. She wishes she lived closer. / I wish she lived closer.
4. I wish I could speak Japanese.
5. I wish he wouldn't leave the door open. / I wish he would close the door.
1. were / was
2. had
3. wasn't / weren't
4. could
5. would stop
1. I wish I had more time.
2. She wishes she could speak Italian.
3. I wish it wasn't raining. / I wish it didn't rain (as a general habit).
4. I wish I were / was taller. (For yourself, don't use 'would'.)
1. Model: I wish I read more — I miss real books.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



2. Model: I wish I could speak French properly — I can order dinner and that's about it.
3. Model: I wish my flatmate would wash his dishes on the same day, not the next Tuesday.
1. was / were / would stop / wasn't / weren't
2. lived / could / would call

Listening · Two friends look back on their year

1. Reviewing their year — an honest, no-social-media version.
2. She wishes she had said no more often — she took on too many extra projects and burned out in October.
3. He wishes he could stop comparing himself to other people online — it 'poisoned' half the year.
1. One evening a week fully offline, no phone, from the moment she gets home.
2. Delete Instagram for the first three months of the year — a full 90-day experiment.
3. Neither wishes they had earned more money — both feel their salaries were 'fine' for the year they had.
1. Light — they laugh often, tease each other, and keep the wishes small. It's affectionate, not tragic.
2. Yes — Voice A explicitly asks Voice B to 'check on me in February', and they set a specific date.
1. had said
2. could
3. don't / had earned
4. fully offline

Quiz

1. (B) had
2. (B) could
3. (C) would stop
4. (B) stop doing / stop trying
5. (B) weren't

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Answer key — Workbook

1. Vocabulary recall

1. Open answer — check with your teacher.
2. Open answer.
3. Open answer.

2. Grammar practice · wish + past simple

1. Model answer — see class notes.
2. Model answer — see class notes.
3. Model answer — see class notes.
4. Model answer — see class notes.
5. Open answer.

3. Reading recall

1. Open answer — around 15 words.
2. Open answer.
3. Open answer — 2 sentences.

4. Listening · a follow-up dialogue

1. Model: both speakers compare their own experience of looking ahead.
2. Open answer — look for specific detail and full sentences.
3. Open answer — see transcript.

6. Reflection

1. Open answer.
2. Open answer — be specific: what, when, how often.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class