

# If I had known . . . I wish I had known . . .

**A**

Study this example situation:

Last month Brian was in the hospital for an operation. Liz didn't know this, so she didn't go to see him. They met a few days ago. Liz said:

**If I had known** you were in the hospital, I **would have gone** to see you.

Liz said, "If I had known you were in the hospital . . ." So she *didn't* know.

When you are talking about the past, you use **if + had ('d) . . .** (if I had known/been/done, etc.):

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

Compare:

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

**B**

Do not use **would** in the **if** part of the sentence. 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)

Note that 'd can be **would** or **had**:

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

**C**

We use **had done** in the same way after **wish**. **I wish something had happened** = I am sorry that it didn't happen:

- I wish **I'd known** that Brian was sick. I would have gone to see him. (but I didn't know)
- I feel sick. I wish I **hadn't eaten** so much cake. (I ate too much cake.)
- Do you wish you **had studied** science instead of languages? (You didn't study science.)
- The weather was cold on our vacation. I wish it **had been** warmer.

Do not use **would have . . .** after **wish** in these sentences:

- I wish it **had been** warmer. (*not* I wish it would have been)

**D**

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

- If I had gone to the party last night, I **would be** tired now. (I am not tired now – *present*)
- If I had 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 <b>would have gone out</b> .
	we <b>could have gone out</b> . (= we would have been able to go out)
	we <b>might have gone out</b> . (= perhaps we would have gone out)

# Exercises

## 37.1 Put the verb into the correct form.

1. I didn't know you were in the hospital. If I'd known (I / know),  
I would have gone (I / go) to see you.
2. John got to the station in time to catch his train. If \_\_\_\_\_  
(he / miss) it, \_\_\_\_\_ (he / be) late for his interview.
3. I'm glad that you reminded me about Rachel's birthday. \_\_\_\_\_  
(I / forget) if \_\_\_\_\_ (you / not / remind) me.
4. Unfortunately, I didn't have my address book with me when I was on vacation. If  
\_\_\_\_\_ (I / have) your address, \_\_\_\_\_  
(I / send) you a postcard.
5. A: How was your trip? Did you have a nice time?  
B: It was OK, but \_\_\_\_\_ (it / be) better if  
\_\_\_\_\_ (the weather / be) nicer.
6. I'm not tired. If \_\_\_\_\_ (I / be) tired, I'd go home now.
7. I wasn't tired last night. If \_\_\_\_\_ (I / be) tired, I would  
have gone home earlier.

## 37.2 Write a sentence with *if* for each situation.

1. I wasn't hungry, so I didn't eat anything.  
If I'd been hungry, I would have eaten something.
2. The accident happened because the driver in front stopped so suddenly.  
If the driver in front \_\_\_\_\_.
3. I didn't know that Matt had to get up early, so I didn't wake him up.  
If I \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I was able to buy the car only because Jim lent me the money.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
5. Michelle wasn't injured in the accident because she was wearing a seat belt.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
6. You didn't have any breakfast – that's why you're hungry now.  
\_\_\_\_\_.

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

1. You've eaten too much and now you feel sick. You say:  
I wish I hadn't eaten so much.
2. There was a job advertised in the newspaper. You decided not to apply for it. Now you think that your decision was wrong. You say:  
I wish I \_\_\_\_\_.
3. When you were younger, you didn't learn to play a musical instrument. Now you regret this. You say:  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. You've painted the door red. Now you think that it doesn't look very good. You say:  
\_\_\_\_\_.
5. You are walking in the country. You would like to take some pictures, but you didn't bring your camera. You say:  
\_\_\_\_\_.
6. You have some unexpected guests. They didn't tell you they were coming. You are very busy and you are not prepared for them. You say (to yourself):  
\_\_\_\_\_.