

### Grammar Point – Past Perfect Pronunciation

To express regrets about past events, we use the **subject**, followed by **wish/wishes**, followed by the **past perfect** (subject + had/hadn't + past participle).

There is a long form and a short form of pronunciation.

#### Regrets about the past

To express regrets about past events, we use the **subject**, followed by **wish/wishes**, followed by the **past perfect** (subject + had/hadn't + past participle).

Positive: I wish I had bought a new coat

Negative: I wish I hadn't bought a new coat

Question: Do you wish you had bought a new coat?

#### Pronunciation - long form:

In the past perfect clause, the subject and 'had' are pronounced **separately**.

I wish **I had** bought a new coat.

I wish **you had** bought a new coat.

I wish **he had** bought a new coat.

I wish **she had** bought a new coat.

I wish **we had** bought a new coat.

I wish **you had** bought a new coat.

I wish **they had** bought a new coat

#### Pronunciation – short form:

In the past perfect clause, the subject and 'had' are pronounced **together**: the **had** is **shortened** to 'd.

I wish **I'd** bought a new coat.

I wish **you'd** bought a new coat.

I wish **he'd** bought a new coat.

I wish **she'd** bought a new coat.

I wish **we'd** bought a new coat.

I wish **you'd** bought a new coat.

I wish **they'd** bought a new coat

### General regrets

To express general regrets about states or things which happen regularly, we use the **subject**, followed by **wish/wishes**, followed by the **past simple** (subject + verb).

Positive: I wish I had more money

Negative: I wish I wasn't so fat

Question: Do you wish you lived in the city?

### Pronunciation

We **don't** usually use a short form when we use wish to talk about general regrets.

~~I wish I'd more money~~ – WRONG

I wish **I had** more money – RIGHT

### Problem areas

Problems with listening and pronunciation of sentences with 'wish' occur for 2 reasons:

1. The listener can't hear the 'had' when past perfect is used.
2. The past simple form of some verbs is the same as the past participle.

1. The listener can't hear the 'had' when past perfect is used.

This can happen when the speaker is talking very quickly.

For example:

I wish **she'd worked** harder' **might** sound like 'I wish **she worked** harder

I wish **you'd listened** to me' **might** sound like 'I wish **you listened** to me

It is an especially common problem when the verb after 'had' begins with a **t** or **d**.

For example:

I wish **you'd told** me' **might** sound like 'I wish **you told** me

I wish **I'd danced** with you' **might** sound like 'I wish **I danced** with you

In the above the meaning changes from a general regret to a specific past regret when 'had' is used.

The past simple form of the verb is the same as the past participle. All the above sentences are grammatically correct, even though the meanings are different.

When the past simple form is not the same past participle, it is easier to work out whether the speaker said 'had'.

# BBC Learning English

## *Grammar Challenge*



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For example:

I wish **you'd taken** your medicine

I wish **you took** your medicine

To deal with these problems, you need to listen carefully to both the pronunciation and the grammar of the sentence.