

Talking about unreal past

We often use the past tense form to express a wish. This is quite common after expressions like I wish, I'd rather, If only, As if, Suppose, and It's time/high time.

Study the examples given below.

I wish I was taller. (NOT I wish I am taller.)

It's time you started looking for a job.

She behaved as if she had been a total stranger.

Rewrite the following sentences using the appropriate form of the verb given in the brackets.

1. It's about time you to bed.

go

went

2. He behaves as if he the Emperor.

is

was

were

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3. If only I more money.

have

had

4. If I earlier, I would have sent you an urgent message.

knew

know

had known

5. It's time you those trousers.

wash

have washed

washed

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6. It's time she waiting for him.

stops

stopped

has stopped

7. I wish I his address.

know

knew

8. I wish I German.

speak

spoke

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Answers

1. It's about time you went to bed.
2. He behaves as if he were the Emperor. (In expressions like these, 'were' is considered more appropriate than 'was'.)
3. If only I had more money.
4. If I had known earlier, I would have sent you an urgent message.
5. It's time you washed those trousers.
6. It's time she stopped waiting for him.
7. I wish I knew his address.
8. I wish I spoke German.