

Unit 39 Would

For **would** and **would have** in **if** sentences (*conditional*), see **Units 36, 37** and **38**.

For **would** in offers, invitations etc., see **Unit 31**. This unit explains some other uses of **would**.

a Sometimes we use **would** after **I wish ...**. Study this example:



It is raining. Tom wants to go out, but not in the rain. He says:

I wish it would stop raining.

This means that Tom is complaining about the rain and wants it to stop. We use **I wish ... would ...** when we want something to happen or somebody to do something. The speaker is complaining about the present situation.

- **I wish** someone **would answer** that telephone. It's been ringing for about five minutes.
- The music next door is very loud. **I wish** they **would turn** it down.

We often use **I wish ... wouldn't** to complain about the way people do things:

- **I wish** you **wouldn't drive** so fast. It makes me nervous.

We use **I wish ... would** when we want something to change or somebody else to do something. So you cannot say 'I wish I would ...'.

For more information about **wish**, see **Units 37** and **38**.

b **Would/wouldn't** is sometimes the past of **will/won't**:

present Tom: I'll lend you some money, Ann.
past Tom said that he **would** lend Ann some money.

present Ann: I promise I **won't** be late.
past Ann promised that she **wouldn't** be late.

present Tom: Damn! The car **won't** start.
past Tom was angry because the car **wouldn't** start.