


1. suggestions
2. wishes

The imperfect tense (**l'imparfait**) has two primary uses: to describe on-going actions or states of being in the past, and to state habitual actions in the past. The imparfait also has several idiomatic uses found in the following contexts:

suggestions

The imparfait is used to suggest an action in phrases beginning with **Si on** ... ?

 Tammy: Si on **achetait** une grosse Suburban?

Tammy: What if we bought a big Suburban? (note: 'on' is often used in the sense of 'nous')

Tex: Si on **achetait** une Harley Davidson?

Tex: What about buying a Harley Davidson?



wishes

The imparfait is used to express wishes such as '**If only** we didn't have a test this week!' The French equivalent structure, **si** + imparfait, may, or may not, contain the adverb **seulement**:

 Tex: Si (seulement) on **avait** plus d'argent!

Tex: If (only) we had more money!

Tammy: Ah, si (seulement) mes parents nous **prêtaient** de l'argent!

Tammy: If only my parents would lend us some money!

Note that the question mark at the end of the sentence indicates a suggestion, and the exclamation mark a wish. In spoken French, however, you have to rely on context and intonation to distinguish between wish and suggestion. Listen to the difference in intonation between these two sentences:

 Tammy: Si je me **faisais** tatouer?

Tammy: What if I got tattooed?

Tex: Si seulement je **pouvais** avoir une moto!

Tex: If only I could have a motorcycle!

For other uses of **si** + imparfait, see **si clauses + conditional**. The imparfait also occurs in idiomatic uses with **depuis** and **venir de**.



fill in the blanks

Formulate wishes by using 'si' plus the imparfait and the subject indicated in parentheses. Place an exclamation point at the end of each sentence.

1. Regarder une vidéo (on)
2. Etre plus mince (je)
3. Etre déjà en vacances (nous)
4. Venir danser avec moi (tu)
5. Penser à moi (Tex)

6. Avoir plus de temps (je)
7. Inviter des amis à la maison (vous)
8. Se marier (on)
9. Aller à Barton Springs (nous)
10. Se trouver plus près d'Austin (Opelousas)
11. Ne pas boire d'insecticide (Corey)
12. Ne pas être snob (les tatous)